



Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond
September 25 – October 2, 2015

Table of Contents

The following news stories are divided into the following sections.

Aboriginal Arts & Culture	2
Aboriginal Business & Finance	11
Aboriginal Community Development	14
Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement	19
Aboriginal Education & Youth	29
Aboriginal Health	50
Aboriginal Identity & Representation	64
Aboriginal Jobs & Labour	67
Aboriginal Politics	69
Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources	118
Land Claims & Treaty Rights	127
Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women	133
Special Topic: Residential Schools & '60s Scoop	142
Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations	158

Aboriginal Arts & Culture

Book review: Wab Kinew's autobiography offers a compelling glimpse into First Nations culture

By Tracy Sherlock, The Vancouver Sun September 25, 2015



Wab Kinew outside of Winnipeg City Hall. His new memoir suggests a future in public, possibly political, life.

Ningosha anishaa wenji-bimoseyan

(I am the reason you walk)

— Anishanaabe travelling song

So opens Wab Kinew's first book, *The Reason You Walk*. It's an autobiography — Kinew's own story, but also that of countless other First Nations people in Canada.

It is also the story of his father, a residential school survivor. Kinew writes of his father, early on in the book: "More than any inheritance, more than any sacred item, more than any title, the legacy he left behind is this: as on that day in the sundance circle when he lifted me from the depths, he taught us that our time on earth we ought to love one another, and that when our hearts are broken, we ought to work hard to make them whole again. This is at the centre of sacred ceremonies practised by Indigenous people. This is what so many of us seek, no matter where we begin life. This is the reason you walk."

Kinew begins the memoir with his father's story of residential school. It's a nasty, sad story in which a little boy is taken from his people, sexually assaulted, robbed of his name and his language and often beaten. While he is there, his own father dies and he is

treated shamefully for standing beside his father's coffin, as was Anishinaabe tradition, instead of kneeling, as was Catholic tradition.

His father becomes an alcoholic and an angry young man, but later quits alcohol completely and becomes a leader in his nation, working to make sure the cultures and traditions stay alive. Kinew himself follows a similar self-destructive path as a young man, but pulls himself together (with the help of music, martial arts, his father and other people). Today, he's a well-known First Nations advocate, a journalist and the associate vice-president for Indigenous Relations at the University of Winnipeg. In 2012 he hosted the TV series 8th Fire on CBC, a documentary series about Aboriginal people in Canada.

Shortly after that, he took a year off to spend time with his father, who was terminally ill with cancer. The pair worked together on an app that translates their language, as a way to connect young people with the language and keep it alive. But more than that, they spent the year connecting with each other, in a way they had not done in their younger years.

In light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, released in June, people might want to learn more about Aboriginal culture, the ways of the people and gain more insight into life as an Indigenous person in Canada. About reconciliation, Kinew writes: "Reconciliation is not something realized on a grand level, something that happens when a prime minister and a national chief shake hands. It takes place at a much more individual level. Reconciliation is realized when two people come together and understand that what they share unites them and that what is different between them needs to be respected."

Reading this book would be a good place to start. It's entertaining, interesting and compelling, but it also has many important and staggering messages.

It includes detailed descriptions of piercing ceremonies that take place at Sundances, of vision seeking experiences and of a sweat lodge ceremony. At one of these ceremonies, when Kinew is pushing himself to his limits, he describes the feeling: "The relatives were there. Even those who weren't. You were there with me too in that moment. There was no more you, there was no more me. There was no more Indian, there was no more white. There was no more woman, there was no more man. There was nothing left. All that remained was unified."

Indigenous teachings about human relations are deeply part of this book, but it is written in a way that is friendly to readers. It's not all serious — this is a greatly readable, captivating and relevant book.

Wab Kinew is appearing at the Vancouver Writers Festival next month.
www.writersfest.bc.ca.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/book+review+kinew+autobiography+offers+compelling+glimpse+into+first+nations+culture/11390813/story.html#ixzz3n45DSm57>

First Nations filmmaker and Bloordale resident Adam Garnet Jones' movie Fire Song had its world premiere at Toronto International Film Festival

Film tells the story of a gay Anishnabe teenager who needs to make life decisions after his sister's suicide



Bloordale's Adam Garret Jones' first feature length film made its world premier at the Toronto International Film Festival and has been chosen as the closing gala film at the imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival.

Bloor West Villager

By [Lisa Rainford](#)

First Nations filmmaker Adam Garnet Jones' full-length feature celebrated its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival to audience members who told him they have lived a variation of the movie protagonist's story.

At the centre of 'Fire Song' is Shane, a gay Anishnabe teenager who lives in Northern Ontario and who is struggling to support his family in the aftermath of his sister's suicide.

Instead of heading off to university in the fall with his secret boyfriend as planned, Shane decides to stay at home to care for his mother – until circumstances take a turn for the worse and he is forced to choose between his family and his future.

Fire Song has been chosen as the closing gala film at the imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, Sunday, Oct. 18 at the TIFF Bell Lightbox.

The movie was a six-year endeavor for Garnet Jones, who not only directed, but wrote the script as well.

“It started out as wanting to write about a feeling; this feeling that exists in a community after a young person commits suicide,” Garnet Jones told The Villager. “There’s this incredible grief and fear because it can become a cluster of suicides.”

Garnet Jones, a Bloordale resident, said he drew from emotions he experienced as a teenager to write the script. Growing up in an abusive home in Edmonton and then Castlegar, B.C., Garnet Jones, who is gay, had thoughts of ending his own life. Immersing himself in the arts saved his life.

Garnet Jones enrolled at The Gulf Islands Film & Television School in B.C., a ‘creative media epicenter’ designed for rookie filmmakers who live with and are mentored by top Canadian media producers and industry professionals.

“I went there when digital video was just becoming available. They wanted to see what would happen if they gave cameras to young people to tell their stories without censorship,” Garnet Jones said.

As a teen, Garnet Jones thought he wanted to be an actor, but after some discouraging advice from a drama teacher and countless auditions without success, he decided to throw in the towel.

“My experience (at Gulf Islands) was like night and day from what it was like being a performer. I felt like people were listening to me,” he said.

As he promotes his film, Garnet Jones doesn’t shy away from sharing personal tidbits of his own life.

“I think it’s been incremental. It doesn’t feel as scary as it might sound,” he said. “The thing about sharing something so personal, it has really revealed to me how common the experience is. It makes me feel more supported.”

Fire Song was filmed at Fort William First Nation, an Ojibway First Nation reserve, outside of Thunder Bay. The majority of the cast is young and aboriginal.

“A lot of people we worked with had never been in front of a camera before, but they were eager to learn,” Garnet Jones said.

Garnet Jones is already at work on his next feature film, which he calls a relationship movie, that’s filmed in and around his Bloordale neighbourhood.

Visit www.imagenative.org for details.

Direct Link: <http://www.insidetoronto.com/whatson-story/5933774-first-nations-filmmaker-and-bloordale-resident-adam-garnet-jones-movie-fire-song-had-its-world-prem/>

“Honey, pass the Maktaaq”

Feasting on YK's offerings, Inuit style

[October 1, 2015](#)



by Juanita Taylor-Towtongie | photos by Angela Gzowski

“Neco, can you carve this turkey? Let’s get eating soon!” I ask, more like tell, my husband who is finishing up his Thanksgiving tasks. Eventually, he lays the perfectly browned stuffed turkey we bought at Fancy Meats beside the cherished country food on our dining room floor, alongside the sharp knives and ului (the plural form for ulu, an Inuit women’s knife) we’ve placed on flattened pieces of cardboard.

That’s how Inuit feast. No plates. No forks. Sitting next to and across from one another, slicing pieces of the Inuit niqai (Inuit country food) including frozen caribou meat, boiled seal meat, boiled caribou ribs and caribou tongue. There’s also maktaaq (beluga whale) and arctic char. At this Thanksgiving feast, there are about 30 guests, people from all walks of life, and we’re ecstatic, because there is also dry caribou meat and dry arctic char, or pipsi.

Neco axes chunks of caribou meat for the women – that’s just courtesy – making it easier to cut into smaller pieces with their ului. There’s sushi-style bowls of soya sauce for dipping. And salt for sprinkling.

This fall marks our sixth year living in Yellowknife. We had planned on staying for two. We left our home in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, to further our careers; Neco is a journeyman power lineman and I am a journalist. It's been working out... mostly. The education system is more challenging for our children and there are more organized activities for them to do. I can get my nails done, a good haircut, a coffee from McDonald's and even wine with a nice dinner at a restaurant.

But, like most Inuit here, we've had to make adjustments.

Our house is in Range Lake, a paved neighbourhood with sidewalks that looks nothing like the treeless, rugged tundra and the windy shores of Hudson's Bay that make up Kangiqliniq, or Rankin Inlet. Once inside though, when we're feasting on country food, we feel closer to our Inuit roots.

When we lived in Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit, my husband hunted for us. Since moving here, he hasn't been able to hunt caribou because of the territorial government's ban, so we fill our freezers courtesy of other hunters back home. It's one of the reasons we constantly wrestle with the idea of moving back to Nunavut, so Neco can hunt like his father does and like his grandfather did before him. Another reason is family. We always feel the tug from them to move back. My mom lives there and same with Neco's parents, the Towtongies. Yes, as in Cathy Towtongie. His mother is the president at Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the organization that administers the land claim agreement. In some ways, Yellowknife still doesn't feel permanent.

At the end of every feast, it is time for tea. Our friend Angela Hovak Johnston made fried bannock and she's brought a bowl full. Anyone who has tasted Angela's bannock knows it's like dessert. It's a skill she learned from living a traditional life, having spent her first seven years in a cabin in Umingmaktok (Bay Chimo), now an abandoned outpost camp in Bathurst Inlet, the place she most calls "home."

"Living in the outpost camp, I loved it," she says. "Living off the land, a very physical way of life, but then when we got sent to school, then we got used to that town-living, easy-living. You get all the taste buds 'cause you tried new stuff, so you crave all the new stuff. But when we were living in Bay Chimo you didn't really have all those cravings, and you were good with one big meal a day; with some berries here and there, but basically living on water and tea."

Those fond early childhood memories turned sour when Angela was faced with a different form of survival: life at a residential school in Cambridge Bay that included abuse, even sexual abuse.

"That was hard, it was hard because it was a bunch of us little kids living in a hostel with hostel parents," she says.

She worked through those horrors by breaking the silence around them. As a performing artist, she throat-sings and recorded an album in 2006 as a way to heal from the abuse at residential school. To see her today, Angela is a happy, healthy, courageous 40-year-old woman who sews beautiful creations such as seal skin mitts, parkas and kamiit, traditional Inuit boots – skills she learned from her mother and aunts who gave her lots of encouragement.

She and her husband have three sons. They've been in Yellowknife six years now. You may have seen her. She has traditional Inuit tattoos on her face and hands. The "V" on her forehead was a common design back in the days before contact with white people. There are lines on her face and hands that represent her sons. There are also symbols of traditional Inuit tools used for seal and caribou hunting.

Angela decided to get the traditional tattoos when she was living in Nova Scotia, where her husband, Mike, is from, and where they lived before moving to Yellowknife. Prior to that, they met in Kugluktuk where he was teaching.

She tested the markings by first penciling them in with eyeliner and going out in public.

"When I first got my tattoos on my face when we were living in Nova Scotia, people would ask me why I did that to my pretty face. But when I came here to Yellowknife, I had no questions. I didn't have to question myself. And when I go home (to Kugluktuk), people remember their grandmothers or great-grandmothers and share a story about them. They're thankful that I am carrying on this tradition."

And that's one of the reasons why she likes living in Yellowknife. People are accepting of the diversity of cultures.

The Johnstons don't visit Kugluktuk much because of the high cost of travel. But because Yellowknife is the hub for the Western Arctic, family and friends come often, either for medical care or while passing through on their way to southern destinations. Even so, she misses seeing elders around town. When her youngest son Bailey, now in Grade 6, finishes school, their plans are to move back to Kugluktuk where her husband will teach and she will be able to get back into fishing derbies and picking berries and learning different sewing techniques from her elders.



Davidee Qaumariaq plans to move back to Iqaluit after finishing an apprenticeship at Polar Tech.

Similarly, 24-year-old Davidee Qaumariaq plans on moving back to his home in Iqaluit after he earns his ticket as a small engine mechanic. He came to Yellowknife last November to visit his girlfriend and landed an apprenticeship opportunity with Polar Tech a month later. He works on snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles, outboard motors and Harleys. Davidee is entering into his first year of the apprenticeship this fall in Quebec, and that comes with studying online.

“I really want to commit to this because any other job that I had in Iqaluit, I haven’t had a good opportunity, so when my boss said ‘I’ll apprentice you,’ I said ‘alright.’ And he said, ‘You gonna stay?’ And I said ‘Yep.’”

His family in Iqaluit is OK with that decision because he’s been able to go home a number of times for visits. His buddies in Iqaluit are also mechanics so he gets to show off his new skills.

“You use computers to work on your sleds. Every time I went home I brought a computer with me and showed my buddies all this. It felt good knowing I knew more than they did because before it was always they knew more than I did. I’ve grown in being a much better mechanic, just from this job.”

While Davidee keeps his eye on the prize – talking about starting his own business in Nunavut when all is done – homesickness kicks in every now and then. Not speaking Inuktitut every day is another change.

“I spoke a lot of Inuktitut when I was in Iqaluit and I never do it here. Our neighbours are Inuit, at first we weren’t too sure but one day they had a bunch of people over and a bunch of kids were playing outside and a little girl starts yelling, ‘Anaanaa! Anaana!’ (Mom, Mom) and then my girlfriend freaked out saying, ‘They’re Inuk!’”

An avid hunter and snowmobile racer, he misses hunting in Nunavut the most; preying on seals, whales, caribou, fish and geese. He's still waiting to catch his first polar bear. His instincts make him want to kill ptarmigan when he sees them around on Yellowknife's snowy streets.

His employer and co-workers make living in Yellowknife easier by giving him the time off to go home, and lending him their boats to go fishing. He's not a fan of portaging but he does get out on the lakes where he's seen bears and wolves, and he's getting used to the trees.

Apart from the high cost of living, Davidee likes what Yellowknife has to offer. There are more activities, such as bowling and driving out of the city to Rae for soft ice cream – things you can't do on Baffin Island. Plus, Yellowknife has a “northern feel” to it because there are so many aboriginal people.

The 2011 Statistics Canada National Household Survey shows four in 10 Inuit live in large, urban centres. Yellowknife is tied with Ottawa for having the fourth largest Inuit population at 735. Edmonton is first, with 1,115 Inuit, followed by Montreal with 900. St. John's has 680.

Not all of Yellowknife's 735 Inuit migrated here from elsewhere. Tiffany Ayalik was born and raised in the capital. Her father is from Kugluktuk, and her mom is from Ontario. Her mother is the one who taught Tiffany and her siblings about Inuit culture, including how to build an igloo and how to hunt and skin a caribou, having been in the North for over 30 years. Ayalik is amazed, and grateful, for that.

“Anything that I did learn about my Inuit culture came from my white mom from Ontario who did her best to try and immerse me and my siblings in a culture that isn't hers, but that she felt is really important for us to learn about,” she says. “So I just have such mad respect for my mom for doing that. She's always told me and my siblings that we're in a very gifted situation, that we can take the best of both worlds.”

I discovered I have a lot in common with Tiffany. Both our grandmothers were born in igloos. Both our moms raised us and our siblings as a single parent. And we both come from blended cultures. And, like me, she doesn't speak Inuktitut fluently, yet she starred in a play called *Night*, a story about youth suicide – a problem all too common across the North – that is performed solely in her father's native language.

“It's one of those things where it was extremely daunting at first, and I was very intimidated, but I just thought to myself, stop being a baby,” she recalls. “You had people speaking Inuktitut in your house all the time, you know more than you think you know, your ear knows it and your mouth knows it, but you just haven't been taught it. So those weren't foreign sounds to me, it would be different if it was a Swahili play or something.”

Martha Kyak from Pond Inlet translated her lines and recorded them so that Tiffany could memorize from repetition... listening over and over... and over and over.

She remains close to her grandmother and her aunts in Kugluktuk, going there every year with her mom to teach the techniques of paddling a canoe and kayak. And she offers storytelling workshops. As much as she loves Nunavut, Tiffany doesn't plan on living there. Her heart is with her man who lives in Greenland. A successful actor himself, she beams when she talks about Greenland's triumphs in keeping a strong Inuit culture, in part because it had a gentler colonization period compared to Nunavut's.

"We've been through so much and still despite that we have a tenacity and a vivacious energy to survive and despite the effen cold winters and brutal conditions, we're still here. Nice try, government! We're still here, we're still annoying!" she says with a laugh.

Like Angela, Tiffany has been using the arts to help struggling kids make sense of their changing worlds. The 27-year-old throat-singer wants to use her voice, skills and talents to address serious issues like abuse and suicide and to battle negativity. She likes pushing boundaries, but says she tries to be respectful at the same time.

My family and I try to be respectful too; respectful of the fact we are living on Dene land.

And we take it one day at a time. Well, more like one year at a time. My husband and I tell each other: It doesn't matter where we are, as long as we're together, we're home.

Our time with other Inuit who are also "just visiting" Yellowknife, times like when we feast together at Thanksgiving, are crucial to staying connected to our culture.

I survey the remnants of our Thanksgiving meal after our guests have left. Every scrap of country food has disappeared from the spread. No one even touched the turkey.

Direct Link: <http://edgcyk.com/article/honey-pass-the-maktaaq/>

Aboriginal Business & Finance

Logger honoured for leadership

Mark NIELSEN / Prince George Citizen
September 27, 2015 10:10 PM



A locally-based logging company has won an award for excellence in aboriginal business leadership.

LTN Contracting Ltd., a partnership between the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and Roga Contracting Ltd., was presented with the award, sponsored by the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) and the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) this week in Vancouver.

LTN general manager and director Troy Young said it was an honour to receive the award.

"You've seen what's happened to the forest economy and to see a First Nations company to go through that battering and come out the other side and be successful, I think it's a testament to the perseverance and endurance we've had to have to make it through," Young said.

Over the 15 years it's been in business, LTN has increased its contract volume tenfold.

"We've got a customer in Canfor who's done a very good job of fostering us to grow our business and become better at the business," Young said.

"We've got our members at Lheidli T'enneh who have entrusted us with the business and have allowed us to develop it and without everyone coming together, this wouldn't have taken place."

Young said it appears the company's education fund set it apart from others seeking the award.

It has helped about 60 Lheidli T'enneh get training and schooling in such pursuits as hair dressing, cooking, teaching and law.

"We generate profit for the band but more importantly, we want to start building capacity within the community," Young said.

The \$5,000 award "celebrates aboriginal entrepreneurs for their success in a forest products business that exemplifies business leadership, exceptional environmental and safety performance and the deliver of high-quality products and services."

- See more at: <http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/news/local-news/logger-honoured-for-leadership-1.2070495#sthash.3CkXjL2w.dpuf>

Six Nations budget woes are campaign fodder

By [Michael-Allan Marion](#), Brantford Expositor

Tuesday, September 29, 2015 9:09:25 EDT PM



OHSWEKEN - Six Nations elected council must dip into its share of gaming revenues to cover a projected \$3.6-million deficit in its 2015-2016 operating budget.

Elected Chief Ava Hill attributes much of the deficit to federal underfunding of basic services.

That issue is not lost on Brantford-Brant candidates in the Oct. 19 federal election, some of whom are raising it on the campaign trail.

"We don't think we should have to use (gaming) revenues to pay for services, but we have to," Hill said in an interview.

"The federal government that has a fiduciary responsibility to provide funding for those services does not give enough."

Hill said the government has a responsibility to provide financial support to First Nations government for public works, fire services and recreation but has been providing less each year.

The problem is that First Nations are limited in their sources of revenue, said Hill. For example, Six Nations residents don't own property so they can't be charged property taxes, the principal source of revenue for municipalities.

Consequently, Hill said, Six Nations increasingly must rely on revenue from investments and its share of proceeds from the Ontario First Nations Limited Partnership, derived from gaming at Casino Rama in Orillia.

Federal underfunding of First Nations is a theme that Hill and the elected council have been emphasizing as transfers continue to dwindle.

The budget's total expenses are pegged at \$66.6 million to cover all the administration's operations. But it forecasts total revenues of only \$63 million from a combination of federal and provincial grants and Six Nations' own sources and investments.

That leaves council with a shortfall of \$3.6 million to fund from other sources. The largest source is Six Nations' share of proceeds from the OFNLP, which amounts to 1.7 per cent of revenues to be shared by 133 first Nations across the province.

Election candidates say the problem of declining federal revenues to First Nations must be addressed.

"We have to see that they have the money they need for things like firefighting and education," New Democrat candidate Marc Laferriere said Monday.

"We have to get back to the table and talk with First Nations on a respectful nation-to-nation basis."

Laferriere noted that Hill has floated an idea that Six Nations be allowed to use some of the excise tax to fund the services they need.

"That's a good idea we could pursue," he said.

Conservative candidate Phil McColeman, who was Brant MP in last Parliament, said he can't explain why federal funding was lowered.

"Not having been a party to those decisions or how they occurred, I can't speak to them," he said.

McColeman noted that Six Nations has recently received special funding for public works projects, such as water treatment plant.

Liberal candidate Danielle Takacs said her party's platform calls for more funding for infrastructure for First Nations and a plan for aboriginal education.

"If anyone goes to Six Nations and looks at the level services they are able to provide, it's clear they are given much less to work with," she said.

Direct Link: <http://www.brantfordexpositor.ca/2015/09/29/six-nations-budget-woes-are-campaign-fodder>

Aboriginal Community Development

RCMP investigated Onion Lake Cree Nation Chief Wallace Fox, file now with Crown prosecutor

[National News](#) | September 25, 2015 by [Jorge Barrera](#)



(Onion Lake Chief Wallace Fox in Ottawa on Jan. 10, 2013. APTN/File photo)

Jorge Barrera

APTN National News

The chief of Onion Lake Cree Nation says he told his council he was being investigated by the RCMP.

Chief Wallace Fox informed his band council Wednesday morning.

“I said I haven’t been charged, that there was a file open,” said Fox, in a text message to *APTN National News*.

APTN National News has learned that Fox, 54, was investigated over “domestic violence” allegations and the file is now in the hands of a Crown prosecutors in North Battleford, Sask.

It is up to the Crown to determine whether there is enough evidence to proceed with charges against the long-time chief of the oil-rich First Nation in Saskatchewan.

A source who spoke to *APTN* on condition of anonymity and who was present at Wednesday’s meeting said Fox arrived late that morning. The source said Fox informed the council of an open file and investigation involving “a former a woman (Fox) used to live with from Ontario”

Fox told *APTN* in an interview conducted the same day that he gave a statement to the RCMP sometime in July or August.

“I did a statement and they were going to investigate and let me know in two weeks. I can’t remember the date I went up to the RCMP. I was called to give a statement,” said Fox. “This was in July or August...I was asked to do this...by the RCMP. I knew about this and it is a domestic thing and I never did what I am accused of.”

Fox’s lawyers sent a “cease and desist” letter to *APTN* shortly after the Wednesday interview.

“We immediately demand that you cease and desist publishing any information regarding the RCMP investigation of Chief Fox. Your conduct hurts not just the reputation of our client, but of all Onion Lake Cree Nation,” said the letter, from Garry Appelt, of law firm Witten Law.

Fox has not been charged with any crime and none of the allegations have been proven in court.

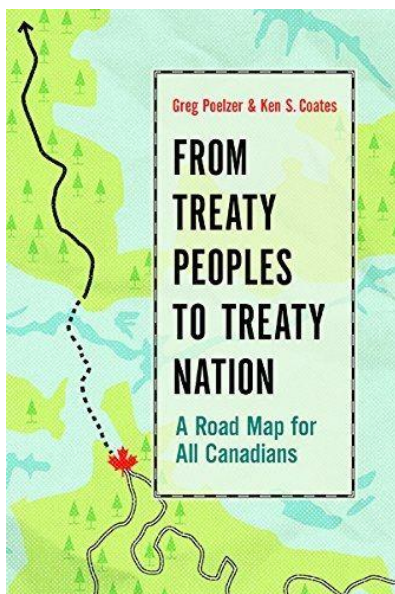
Fox denied all allegations in an interview with *APTN*.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/09/25/rcmp-investigated-onion-lake-cree-nation-chief-wallace-fox-file-now-with-crown-prosecutor/>

Take note of Aboriginal accomplishments

Greg Poelzer and Ken S. Coates

First posted: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 10:58 AM EDT | Updated: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 11:10 AM EDT



"From Treaty Peoples to Treaty Nation: A Road Map for All Canadians." (Supplied)

The following is an excerpt from [From Treaty Peoples to Treaty Nation: A Road Map for All Canadians](#), a title out from UBC Press.

Canadians have paid far too little attention to one of the most remarkable stories in their recent history, the great pace of progress in making Aboriginal lives better. If you're feeling helpless about the future of Canada's Indigenous peoples, you haven't been paying attention.

The bitterly sad problems of young people at Davis Inlet, Labrador, attract much more attention than a successful band-run school (and efforts at the new Labrador community, Natuashish, to ban alcohol drew the media back to the settlement). The lingering effects of fetal alcohol syndrome spark far more critical debate than does the effective management of federally funded social assistance programs.

The accomplishments of a musician or artist are individualized and understood as a personal achievement; the difficulties of a criminal or alcoholic are generalized as part of the social pathology of a community.

Success stories are a vital part of Aboriginal life, yet they are missing from the picture in Canada. The revitalization of potlatches and powwows, the achievements of band-managed health care centres, the investment activities of community economic development offices, and the educational achievements of thousands of college and university students speak to a different future.

There is a pattern worth noting: crises are noisy; accomplishments are quiet. But ... [t]hese impressive and expanding accomplishments must be factored into the picture if non-Aboriginal Canadians hope to understand the healthy optimism and anticipation that runs deep in Canada's Aboriginal communities.

It is commonplace to emphasize the troubles facing Aboriginal people in Canada. And while we must acknowledge that there's much left to do, let's be sure to consider what Indigenous communities have done despite the burdens of history and despite contemporary attitudes, often with the support of governments and non-Aboriginal groups.

A battle to sustain language and cultural traditions is being waged, and communities are taking greater responsibility for education, health care, and local government. Aboriginal educational institutions exist across the country, ranging from First Nations day care centres to independent postsecondary institutions.

Economic opportunities are expanding, largely through Indigenous entrepreneurship and joint ventures. Little of this was in place forty years ago. The prospects for continued improvement of Aboriginal circumstances remain very strong.

More than half of Canada's Aboriginal people live off-reserve. They are mingling and cooperating with other Canadians in countless new and often positive ways. In no way is it fair to characterize the move into the cities as one of unrelenting despair and hardship, although the Aboriginal areas of Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton, and a few other centres belie this observation.

But even here there are signs of change. The impressive steps taken by past president Lloyd Axworthy of the University of Winnipeg to connect that institution to the social and economic challenges of urban Aboriginal people are creating change.

That Don Iveson, elected as mayor of Edmonton in 2013, committed his city to addressing the challenges faced by its Aboriginal people points to new energy and determination on the part of non-Aboriginal politicians.

Serious health problems, especially the near epidemic of diabetes, have been identified in Aboriginal populations, and major research and treatment programs have been launched to address some of the causes and consequences.

Indigenous life expectancy has been rising rapidly – from less than sixty-one years for Aboriginal males in 1980 to a forecast of over seventy-four years in 2021. The gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and other Canadians was almost 11 years in 1980 but is expected to fall to 5.2 for Indigenous men and 3.8 for Indigenous women by 2021. Infant mortality rates that stood at a scandalous 23.7 per 1,000 in 1980 – over twice the national average – had fallen to 6.4 by 2000. That was only 0.9 points higher than the Canadian average of 5.5. While on-reserve housing remains a serious problem, the number of “adequate units” increased from 45.7% in 1993–94 to 53.2% in 2002–03, although this latter number was a drop from a high of 56.9% in 1999–2000.

Aboriginal people are still significantly overrepresented in the justice system – they were 21% of all custodial and community admissions in 2003, an increase of 3% over four years. In recognition of the ongoing challenges, the federal justice system has been seeking new ways (not always with success) to accommodate Aboriginal culture, spirituality, and healing practices.

More and more developments aimed at Aboriginal peoples are being initiated and managed by Indigenous organizations. Indigenous communities know of the severity and depth of their problems. They know that, whoever is at fault for causing their difficulties, they are responsible for finding viable and sustainable solutions.

To those who wonder if anything can or will change, there is a simple answer: change is already happening.

- Ken S. Coates is Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan and a Senior Fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute. Greg Poelzer is Executive Chair at the International Centre for Northern Governance and Development.

Direct Link: <http://www.torontosun.com/2015/09/30/take-note-of-aboriginal-accomplishments>

Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

Tests to predict chances of reoffending unreliable for aboriginal inmates: judge

By Doug Quan, National Post September 25, 2015



The Mountain Institution in Agassiz, B.C., is one of the prisons where Jeffrey Ewert has served time.

Canada's prison officials have known for years that psychological tests used to determine whether inmates are likely to reoffend are unreliable for aboriginal offenders, but they've done nothing to address the problem, a federal judge has found.

In a blistering critique, the Federal Court ruled the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC's) risk-assessment tools failed to consider the "special needs" of aboriginals, lacked scientific rigour and were susceptible to "cultural bias."

One assessment tools was developed using mostly Caucasian subjects and has the potential to yield what other researchers have termed statistical "junk," he said.

"This is not an issue which CSC missed inadvertently. It has been a live issue since 2000, has been on CSC's 'radar screen,' and the subject of past court decisions," Judge Michael Phelan wrote in a recent ruling.

"It is time for the matter to be resolved."

Phelan said he intends to issue an order prohibiting the correctional service from using the assessment tools on aboriginal inmates until it conducts a study that validates their use in relation to that group.

While aboriginals account for about four per cent of the Canadian population, they represent about 23 per cent of the inmate population.

A spokeswoman said Thursday the correctional service is reviewing the judge's ruling and has no further comment.

The ruling stemmed from a lawsuit brought forward by Jeffrey Ewert, a 53-year-old inmate who self-identifies as Metis (his mother is of Metis descent; his father was a British serviceman) and who was raised by an adopted Caucasian family in Surrey, B.C., since he was six months old.

The judge acknowledged Ewert is "no poster boy" for the aboriginal community. He is serving two life sentences for second-degree murder and attempted murder. In both cases, he strangled and sexually assaulted his victims, leaving one dead in a river and the other braindamaged and crippled. But the judge noted Ewert's upbringing "was itself tragic." His adopted father was an alcoholic, his adopted mother was psychologically ill and his adopted siblings subjected him to racism and discrimination.

Ewert, who has spent the past 30 years in B.C. and Quebec prisons, has been classified as either a medium-or maximum-security risk and has been denied multiple requests for escorted temporary absences, court heard. It was his position these decisions were based on flawed psychological assessments, which found he had "significant psychopathic traits."

"The writing's on the wall," Jason Gratl, Ewert's lawyer, said Thursday. "The judge is saying these tests should not be used on aboriginal inmates at all."

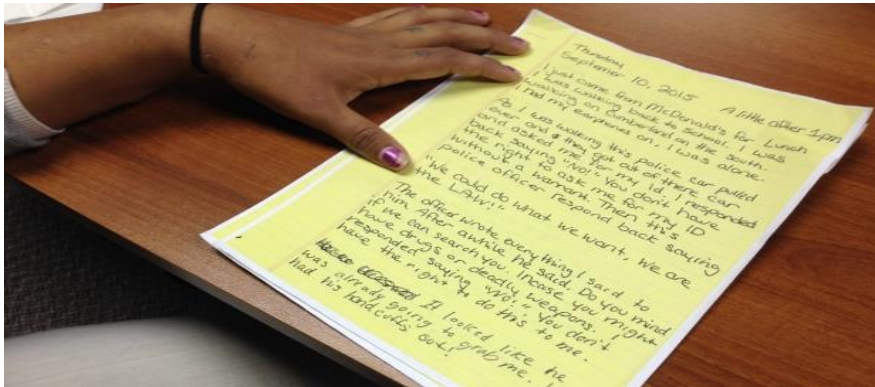
Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/news/tests+predict+chances+reoffending+unreliable+aboriginal+inmates+judge/11389654/story.html>

First Nations teen files complaint against Thunder Bay police after street check

'I felt so terrified,' Cheyanne Moonias, 18, says after interaction with Thunder Bay police

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 29, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 29, 2015 11:30 AM ET



Cheyenne Moonias, 18, filed this handwritten complaint with Ontario's civilian police oversight agency, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, after she says she was threatened by Thunder Bay police officers who she says had no reason to stop her. (Jody Porter/CBC)

A teenager from Neskantaga First Nation in northern Ontario has filed a formal complaint against Thunder Bay police after she says she was subject to a street check that left her frightened and under threat.

Cheyenne Moonias, 18, is living in Thunder Bay, Ont. to attend school at the Matawa Learning Centre.

Her complaint to Ontario's civilian police oversight body, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, said that she was walking back to school after lunch on Sept. 10 around 1 p.m. when she was approached by two male officers asking for her identification.

"I responded back, saying 'no, you don't have the right to ask me for i.d.'", Moonias said. "The police officer responded back 'we could do what we want, we are the law.'"

Moonias said the officers then asked if they could search her for drugs or weapons.



Marilyn Waswa says the way Thunder Bay police treated her daughter has her rethinking the decision to allow the teenager to leave home in Neskantaga First Nation and come to the city for school. (Jody Porter/CBC)

"He looked like he was already going to grab me, he had his handcuffs out," she said. "I kept saying 'no, I'm just a girl who was trying to get to school.' I was crying too."

Moonias said she asked if she could go, but was told to "stay put" or she would be arrested.

She asked again and the police "finally said 'we will let you go, but this is not over,'" Moonias said. "They sounded so aggressive. I walked back to class. I felt so terrified."

A school official took Moonias to the police station to file a report about the incident.

In a written response, Thunder Bay police said it would be inappropriate to comment directly on the complaint.

"Officers will from time to time, have the need to speak with members of the public," stated police spokesperson Chris Adams. "The Thunder Bay Police Service does not arbitrarily stop persons to collect personal information."

The incident with police has left Moonias' mother, Marilyn Waswa, rethinking her decision to allow Cheyanne, and her younger sister, to attend school in the city. Thunder Bay is approximately 500 kilometres south of Neskantaga, a fly-in First Nation.

"My first thought was getting both of my girls back home, without even thinking twice," Waswa said. "I wanted them home. [But] I talked to them first and they want to continue their education and I want them to finish their school."

Waswa said she constantly worries about the safety of her daughters and used to have faith that police might help them stay safe.

"Now I feel like I don't trust them," she said.

Her daughter said she has lost faith in the entire policing profession.

"You never know what they could do to you," Moonias said. "I came out here to get an education and to succeed on my future and my goals."

"One of my dream goals is to become a police officer, but I don't think I want to be that anymore because of what happened to me," she said.

[The safety of First Nations students in Thunder Bay will be the focus of an inquest into to the deaths of seven First Nations students in the city.](#) It is set to begin October 5.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-teen-files-complaint-against-thunder-bay-police-after-street-check-1.3247025>

First Nations student deaths inquest: families look for answers

Inquest starting Monday in Thunder Bay 'will be too difficult for some family members to attend'

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 29, 2015 7:00 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 29, 2015 7:00 PM ET

The families of some of the First Nations students, whose deaths will be the subject of an inquest starting Oct. 5 in Thunder Bay, Ont., are expressing their hopes and fears about the process.



Jethro Anderson of Kasabonika Lake First Nation died in 2000 while attending high school in Thunder Bay. He was 15. (CBC)

The mothers of Paul Panacheese, Jordan Wabasse and Jethro Anderson issued statements on Wednesday, through their lawyer.

All of their sons, along with four other teens — Curran Strang, Robyn Harper, Reggie Bushie and Kyle Morriveau — died after leaving home to attend high school in Thunder Bay. The inquest will investigate the circumstances surrounding their deaths and make recommendations for preventing other similar deaths in the future.

"Half of me wants to know what happened to Jethro, and the other half of me wants to leave it alone," said Anderson's mother Stella, adding that her "heart shattered into a million pieces" when she heard Jethro's body was found in 2000. He was 15.

"A lot has happened over the past fifteen years, I have made positive life changes," she said. "I miss Jethro every day and the thought of learning more about his death is frightening and brings up old wounds that have been slowly healing."

Long wait

The inquest was first called in 2012 but problems with Ontario's jury roll system and the volume of evidence delayed its start until this year.



Jordan Wabasse from Webequie First Nation died while attending school in Thunder Bay. He was 15. (CBC)

Bernice Jacobs, the mother of Jordan Wabasse, said she is glad it is finally moving ahead "so that families do not have to wait or hold off on planning their lives because that's what it feels like we have been doing."

The start of the inquest will present new emotional challenges, the mothers said.

"It will be too difficult for some family members to attend." Maryanne Panacheese said. "I personally have to attend to honour Paul and the other students."

"Paul wanted better for First Nation students," she said. "He wanted them to be able attend school to access a better system and get better education. Because I know this is how Paul felt, I agreed to participate in this inquest."



Paul Panacheese, from Mishkeegogamang First Nation died in 2006 while attending school in Thunder Bay. He was 21. (CBC)

'I just can't let him go'

Jacobs also hopes the inquest results in improvements to First Nations education. Her two other sons are attending high school at home in Webequie, where she said the course choices are limited and there is no science lab, art courses, technical shops or gymnasium.

She said one of her boys wants to come to Thunder Bay for school, but after Jordan's death at 15 in 2011, "I just can't let him go," she said.

Panacheese has another, more personal hope for the inquest. Her son Paul died in 2006. He was 21. Maryanne said she still does not know the cause of death.

Some reports have said he died of an overdose but "there is uncertainty in relation to Paul's death and whether heart complications had a role in his death," according to a statement from her lawyer.

"It has been almost nine years and we are still waiting for some answers," Panacheese said. "It is our hope that the inquest will help us to understand more."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-student-deaths-inquest-families-look-for-answers-1.3249124>

Restricted carbine, drugs seized from a home on the Enoch Cree Nation

First posted: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 02:39 PM MDT | Updated: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 02:48 PM MDT



Weapons seized by ALERT. (Supplied)

A loaded SKS semi-automatic carbine has been seized along with several replica firearms from a home on the Enoch Cree Nation, says the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT).

ALERT Edmonton, an integrated team consisting of Edmonton city police and RCMP members, made the firearm seizure on Sept. 24.

The SKS carbine seized was a restricted firearm that was equipped with a prohibited magazine.

ALERT alleges that some residents from the home were active in trafficking drugs and involved in property crimes on the reservation and in the Edmonton area.

In addition, lock picking sets, a digital key making machine, and numerous pieces of stolen personal identification were recovered.

ALERT also seized small quantities of methamphetamine and GHB and other evidence consistent with drug trafficking.

Allison Gilmour, 34, and Michael Reigate, 33, are facing charges related to drugs, firearms, and stolen property. Reigate had been wanted on a Canada-wide warrant since Aug. 2014 for parole violations.

Direct Link: <http://www.edmontonsun.com/2015/09/29/restricted-carbine-drugs-seized-from-a-home-on-the-enoch-cree-nation>

Indigenous protocol signed at OC

by [Staff Writer - Vernon Morning Star](#)

posted Sep 30, 2015 at 1:00 AM



Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton watches as Okanagan Indian Band Coun. Allan Louis signs the indigenous education protocol.

Okanagan College and several First Nations and Metis partners have signed a commitment that recognizes the school's responsibility to indigenous education and collaboration with aboriginal communities.

The indigenous education protocol was developed by Colleges and Institutes Canada.

"Okanagan College has been strengthening our service and connection to the First Nations and Metis of our region over the past decade," said Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton.

"We have seen significant growth in the number of aboriginal students who choose our institution for their education. Last year, we had 1,535 aboriginal students attend OC, more than three times the number who attended in 2005-06."

While pleased with the progress made, Hamilton admits other steps need to be taken.

"We can do more in terms of access and supporting student success, and in working with bands and friendship centres, Metis groups and other associations to learn indigenous knowledge, culture and traditions for the benefit of all."

Okanagan College was joined at the signing ceremony by representatives of the Okanagan Indian Band, the Metis Association of Salmon Arm, the Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, the Westbank First Nation and the Metis Community Service Society of B.C.

Allan Louis, an OKIB councillor, recognized the importance of education for the aboriginal community and the significant growth that has taken place at the college since he attended in the early 1990s.

“There were only five First Nations students here then,” he said.

“This many students is tremendous. Education is key for our community.”

Direct Link: <http://www.vernonmorningstar.com/community/329979511.html>

Defrocked Arctic priest enters more guilty pleas for sex abuse



Eric Dejaeger leaves an Iqaluit, Nunavut courtroom Jan. 20, 2011. He is now awaiting further sentencing on another four counts. (Chris Windeyer / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

The Canadian Press

Published Wednesday, September 30, 2015 3:13PM EDT

IQALUIT, Nunavut - A defrocked Arctic priest already serving time for the sexual abuse of Inuit children is awaiting further sentencing on another four charges.

Eric Dejaeger is to be sentenced Oct. 22 after pleading guilty in Iqaluit on Tuesday to crimes in Edmonton and Grande Cache, Alta.

They include indecent assault and gross indecency.



Eric Dejaeger is escorted by police outside an Iqaluit, Nunavut courtroom Jan. 20, 2011. (Chris Windeyer / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

Dejaeger, who is 68, lived in Edmonton from 1974 to 1978, when he was studying to be a priest.

He is already serving a 19-year sentence for 32 sex offences against Inuit children that he committed between 1978 and 1982 in the remote village of Igloolik.

The victims in that case included 12 boys, 10 girls and one dog.

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/defrocked-arctic-priest-enters-more-guilty-pleas-for-sex-abuse-1.2588620>

Aboriginal Education & Youth

CBE Learning Director honoured with Indigenous Educator award

Elizabeth Gouthro recognized as a partner in Indigenous Education



Elizabeth Gouthro, a non-Indigenous educator, has been selected to receive a national Indigenous educator award.

By: [Aaron Chatha](#) Metro Published on Wed Sep 23 2015

Calgary Board of Education learning director Elizabeth Gouthro believes there isn't one solution, action or strategy to help learners from the Aboriginal community – but through initiatives aimed at engaging the community, a difference can be made.

That's why Gouthro, a non-indigenous educator, has been selected to receive an Indigenous educator award in the category of Partner in Indigenous Education at the annual Indspire National Gathering for Indigenous Education.

Gouthro is aware of the unique challenges Aboriginal students face.

"We have some extremely gifted aboriginal students," she said. "I think it's important to understand, sometimes when we say aboriginal students, people don't understand that many of them are successful. But some of the children and their families who aren't successful really suffer from the impact of poverty and the impact of residential schools – that's multi-generational."

Gouthro and her team at the CBE have been responsible for creating the Circle of Nations Museum, which housing Aboriginal artifacts given to the CBE.

Direct Link: <http://www.metronews.ca/news/calgary/2015/09/24/learning-director-honoured-with-indigenous-educator-award.html>

FSIN wants commitment on post-secondary funding

By Creeden Martell, The StarPhoenix September 26, 2015



FSIN Vice Chief Bobby Cameron.

Members of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) want commitments from federal leaders on plans for post-secondary education funding for First Nations students.

Funding for on-reserve schools has been subject to a two per cent cap on annual expenditure increases since 1996.

FSIN vice chief Bobby Cameron said the cap has been a hindrance. Funding to First Nations students is provided through their bands using the Post Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP). The cap has limited high school graduates' ability to achieve a higher education, he said.

"We have always maintained that the inherent and treaty right to education will be one of our priorities for the benefit of our First Nations people."

Cameron wants immediate clarification from the federal government on the PSSSP. The federal government stated in 2009 that plans for changes to the program would require First Nations students to apply for funding through Canada Student Loans instead.

Students who are funded through the PSSSP currently do not have to pay back the money they receive, as they would a loan.

Cameron said he is concerned about a funding decrease in 2016, resulting in less First Nations students accessing post-secondary education.

"That's very alarming and disconcerting for many of us leaders in Saskatchewan and across Canada," he said, noting the funding level should reflect aboriginal population growth in Canada and Saskatchewan, but the cap has remained stagnant since 1996.

If funding had increased, thousands more First Nations students could have had a post secondary education.

"It could've, and it should've," Cameron said.

Janine Baldhead, post-secondary counsellor for One Arrow First Nation, thinks changing the PSSSP to the Student Loans program goes against the spirit of the treaties.

One Arrow has imposed a limit on the number of students it can sponsor due to the lack of funding. There has been no increase in post-secondary funding in the time she has held her position at One Arrow, she said.

Baldhead wants the cap lifted so the full benefit to First Nations can be determined. That would allow First Nations students to attend a university without having to compete against each other for a funding spot, she said.

One Arrow has a waiting list of 15 students. When they get tired of waiting, they apply to the student loans program.

“They’re expecting us to fund students when they’re the ones who implement Enhanced Service Delivery, which then puts our 18- to 24-year-olds into post-sec when our dollars are capped,” Baldhead says.

“They’re making First Nations jump through loopholes to get a better education, yet they don’t want to provide the dollars to do that.”

She said the current system makes it harder for First Nations people to better themselves.

“They’re putting things out to the general public, saying ‘Hey look, they’re not doing anything,’ ” Baldhead said.

According to a release from the Assembly of First Nations, the PSSSP funded about 22,303 students in 2008, using \$300 million dollars.

According to the AFN, an additional \$424 million was needed: \$147 million alone for the students who were funded, another \$64 million for 3,213 students who were ready to enrol, \$208 million for the backlog of students who were unable to enrol, and \$5 million for the 280 students needed to close the post-secondary education gap.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/business/fsin+wants+commitment+post+secondary+funding/11391696/story.html>

Up to 20 cuts when aboriginal agency becomes accredited to take over care of First Nations children

By [Jeffrey Ougler](#), Sault Star

Saturday, September 26, 2015 12:00:39 EDT PM



SAULT STE. MARIE - Anywhere from 10 to 20 Children's Aid Society of Algoma workers will lose their jobs when a regional aboriginal child welfare prevention service agency becomes accredited to take over care of First Nations children, the Sault Star has learned.

Lee-Ann Pettenuzzo, president of CUPE Local 5269 which represents unionized CAS employees, says she applauds Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Family and Community Services and its mandate, but grieves the subsequent job cuts her membership will shoulder.

"This is in place ... This is another agency taking over some of the services to meet the needs of the aboriginal population," Pettenuzzo said. "So, it's happening. There's nothing we can do to stop it. I'm very happy they're moving forward. It's just unfortunate we're losing some really great staff."

And unfortunate there are still a number of unanswered questions, said Pettenuzzo, who represents more than 130 members.

The union doesn't necessarily place blame on the employer.

"We've committed to having regular meetings to try and assist our employees and get the information flowing," Pettenuzzo said.

"But if the employer doesn't have it, if it's not forthcoming to them, it's really difficult for them to provide it to the union."

The union is told cuts could happen within the next 12 to 24 months.

Affected positions will include child protection workers, foster care workers, child and care workers and administration assistants.

Concrete numbers, which Algoma CAS offices will be hit hardest and who will be affected, remains unknown to the union.

"It is very tough. It is very tough on our workers," said Pettenuzzo, adding the situation is especially taxing coming on the heels of some 10 recent job cuts and intense contract negotiations. "They're uncertain of their future and there's not a whole lot I can do."

Children's Aid Society of Algoma has offices in Sault Ste. Marie with outlying branches in Wawa, Hornepayne, Blind River and Elliot Lake.

"Our employer has to right-size according to the funding they're allotted given the (number) of people we service," Pettenuzzo said. "We don't know what the impact will be in terms of our services."

Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Family and Community Services is a Anishnawbek child welfare prevention service agency that works in collaboration with seven regional First Nations providing children, youth and families "culturally appropriate" services, says its website. First Nations communities within its jurisdiction include: Batchewana First Nation,

Garden River First Nation, Thessalon First Nation, Mississauga First Nation, Serpent River First Nation, Sagamok Anishnawbek and Atikameksheng Anishnawbek (Whitefish Lake First Nation).

According to its website, Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min, established in 1987, debated for years when it would begin working at becoming its own mandated child welfare agency. In March 2009, its board of directors, in collaboration with North Shore Tribal Council chiefs and Health and Social Services managers, determined that the agency would begin pursuing designation as a mandated child welfare authority.

The goal was to achieve accreditation by 2016.

Children's Aid Society of Algoma executive director Kim Streich-Poser said her group has worked for a number of years with Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Family and Community Services as the aboriginal organization moved toward becoming its own mandated child welfare agency.

"This spring, they were advised they were ready to move into what's called their transition phase of development," Kim Streich-Poser said.

Children's Aid Society of Algoma, as well as the Children's Aid Society of Manitoulin/Sudbury, will, Streich-Poser said, work with Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min "for them to develop their capacity with regard to the delivery of child protection services to aboriginal children, youth and families throughout the district of Algoma and within their jurisdiction in the district of Sudbury."

Streich-Poser called the union-cited job-loss figures "an estimate."

"It would be job losses within the Children's Aid Society of Algoma conversely," she added.

There would be employment "opportunities and job growth" with Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Child and Family Services as it assumes its new role, as well.

"So the jobs don't disappear," Streich-Poser said. "The jobs, basically, will shift to another organization. So it's not job loss from our entire area. It's really a shifting of responsibility, a shifting of resources."

On Friday, two child welfare worker postings were listed on Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Child and Family Services's website.

Laid off Children's Aid Society of Algoma workers "may be" eligible for such Da-Win-Da-Min positions, Streich-Poser said.

"They certainly are able to apply to the positions as they present themselves or come up with Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min," she added. "We have already, actually, had a couple of

individuals who have taken positions with Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min over the last year or two. So, that opportunity is there for those workers."

Pettenuzzo said Children's Aid Society of Algoma services a "large population" of First Nations individuals.

"The government committed to getting it off the ground," she said.

"(Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min is) in a really good place to move forward, and that's what's happening. But how long that takes is anybody's guess."

Pettenuzzo said she believes Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min will prove able in its new duties.

"Do I have concerns about the qualifications of Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min? No," said Pettenuzzo, adding those taking over receive the same training and designation as that of CAS workers.

"That's not an issue for me. They have to certainly complete all of the child protection training that we have to, so I don't see where that's an issue.

"Am I concerned that us at CAS Algoma are losing positions? Of course. And I don't want that to happen."

Direct Link: <http://www.saultstar.com/2015/09/26/up-to-20-cuts-when-aboriginal-agency-becomes-accredited-to-take-over-care-of-first-nations-children>

First Nation boarding school nothing like residential schools of past



Glenda Harper, 16, is in her second year at Southeast Collegiate. She comes from the St. Theresa Point First Nation, a fly-in community over 600 kilometres north of Winnipeg. (Tim Fontaine)

Friday September 25, 2015

For many, the term 'residential school' conjures up painful memories of children snatched from their families and communities, stripped of their culture, and in some cases, abuses.

In Manitoba, some First Nations youth still leave their homes and communities for 10 months at a time, to live and study at a boarding school.

Sheryl McCorrister, the principal of Southeast Collegiate, says that's where any similarity ends.

"It's very different from residential school. The kids are participant here. It's all about them," she says.

Pursuing dreams

Grade 12 student Angus Berens comes from Berens River First Nation, 400 kilometres north of Winnipeg. He dreams of helping his people. and he says that means he needs to finish high school

"I wanted to be an engineer, and then I wanted to be a cook, and then I wanted to be a carpenter."



Grade 12 student Angus Berens comes from Berens River First Nation, 400 kilometres north of Winnipeg. (Tim Fontaine)

"But since this past year and a half, I'm kind of leaning to working with youth. I'm actually thinking of going to Brandon [Manitoba] and studying psychology so I can work with youth for a few years," says Berens.

A total of 165 students have made the same journey to Southeast Collegiate this year, from 16 First Nations across Manitoba.

"Usually they don't have a Grade 10,11 or 12 so they have to come here for their education," says McCorrister.

"A lot of people don't know that this school exists for that purpose."

Situated in Fairfield Park in south Winnipeg, Southeast Collegiate is owned by the Southeast Resource Development Council, a tribal council made up of eight Manitoba First Nations.

The campus is a series of buildings that once housed a seminary and includes classrooms, a cafeteria and gymnasium, as well as the dorms where the students live. It has the feel of a small college but many of the walls are covered with indigenous art or posters.

Creating community

"These kids are gone from the people they love for ten months, so we're going to work from the heart. We've got to be the parents to these kids and we've got to help and guide them," McCorrister says.



The walls in lodge manager Will Hudson's office covered with messages and signatures from former students of Southeast Collegiate, spanning 6 years. (Tim Fontaine)

One of the people helping and guiding those students is Will Hudson, the school's lodge manager of six years.

"A house parent, really, is what I do," Hudson says. "Students call me 'the lodge-father.'"

The walls of Hudson's office are covered with signatures and messages from the many students he's looked after over the years — so many that kids have started writing on the ceiling.

"Everyone binds together because the one common thing they all share is that everyone is away from home."

The school takes several approaches to fostering a sense of community, especially since students frequently experience homesickness soon after arriving. Those who come from the same community are often housed together for the first few months — but it doesn't mean there's the usual cliques seen in other high schools.

"Quite often after a few months they'll try and switch up and say 'if you're from Berens but I come from Pauingassi we can still room together'" Will Hudson says.

Keeping students safe

Glenda Harper, 16, is in her second year at the school. She comes from the St. Theresa Point First Nation — a fly-in community over 600 kilometers north of Winnipeg.

"Yeah, it's hard," she says. "But there's other people I can talk to and they'll feel the same too. And it helps me."

"It's hard for the first two months because you miss your mom, you miss your granny and grandpa, you miss your brothers and sisters and you just miss home, generally," says Angus Berens.



'We've got to be the parents to these kids and we've got to help and guide them,' says Southeast Collegiate principal/director Sheryl McCorrister (CBC)

But there are times when being homesick is the least of the student's worries.

Ten months ago, a student at Southeast Collegiate was brutally attacked when she went with friends to the city's downtown.

Rinelle Harper, 16, nearly died and spent weeks recovering in hospital. The attack also made headlines across Canada.

"For that to happen to one of our students at the school here, it was devastating for all of us," Berens says. "Because we're a family, we take each other as family."

"It was a tough situation and hard to talk about, to tell you the truth," Hudson says. "Because you never want to see a student like that."

You would think an incident like that would keep students away, but enrolment is actually up 15 per cent from last year and there's a waiting list.

Education

"I always tell the students, as Justice Murray Sinclair said, 'we got to this point through residential school and it will be through education that we get out,'" says McCorrister.

And being away from home for ten months is a sacrifice Angus Berens says he's willing to make.

"It's tough in the long run but then after a while you start seeing why you leave home," he says.

"Because we've got to better ourselves and the only way we can better ourselves is to leave the community and come back to the community later and make it a better place."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/buffy-sainte-marie-wab-kinew-and-how-dna-remembers-trauma-1.3242375/first-nation-boarding-school-nothing-like-residential-schools-of-past-1.3244198>

New program helps First Nations students transition to university

By [Talía Ricci](#) Reporter/Anchor Global News, September 28, 2015 10:26 pm



WATCH: Global's Talia Ricci tells you about a new pilot program to help students from Manitoba First Nations transition to life on a university campus

WINNIPEG — A new pilot program is helping students from Manitoba First Nations transition to life on a university campus. The Peguis First Nation Post Secondary Transition Program runs for ten months. The 19 students live and study at the Canadian Mennonite University.

“What’s good about this program is that it introduces them to the city with a group of people they already know,” said Cheryl Pauls, CMU president. “They’re learning the same things, experiencing the same things but at the same time they’re a part of the community here.”

Stephanie Sinclair hopes to become a pharmacist. She initially enrolled at the University of Manitoba but found the transition to be too overwhelming.

“It’s hard moving from home to university,” said Sinclair. “It hit me emotionally and I just wanted to quit.”

Instead the 19-year-old started the pilot program and she said it’s helped immensely with her studies.

“It’s easier to stay in school when they’re pushing us, that’s what I missed. I wish they had that last year for me but it’s better for me this year,” said Sinclair.

The program does have a strong academic focus but it also touches on subjects like navigating the city and how to handle the emotional stress of big life changes.

“They learn how to ride the bus, find a family doctor, do online banking,” said Clairissa Kelly who coordinates the program. “All of these life skills are a big part of our program.”

If the pilot program is successful, it will be considered for future First Nations students.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2246374/new-program-helps-first-nations-students-transition-to-university/>

Aboriginal agency says B.C. shifting blame in foster teen's death



An exterior view of the British Columbia Legislature is shown in Victoria, B.C., on August 26, 2011. (Darryl Dyck / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

Laura Kane , The Canadian Press

Published Tuesday, September 29, 2015 3:09PM EDT

Last Updated Tuesday, September 29, 2015 8:23PM EDT

VANCOUVER -- British Columbia Premier Christy Clark is facing mounting criticism for accusing an aboriginal agency of making a "real mistake" that led to the death of a young man in government care outside a hotel.

The agency, First Nations leaders and the provincial children's representative all decried the premier's comments, which she made while a review of the death is still underway.

"We're walking through fire here and we need to walk through it together," said Gwen Point, board chair of the Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society.

"You can't turn around and blame somebody for something. Everybody's got to take responsibility."

The premier told reporters on Friday the agency violated policy when it didn't tell the Children's Ministry that 18-year-old Alex Gervais was being housed alone in an Abbotsford hotel.

While Clark added there shouldn't be a rush to judgment until all the facts are known, she said the agency's "mistake" had tragic outcomes and promised it would face consequences.

The teen fell from the hotel's fourth-floor window on Sept. 18. Children's representative Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond said it's believed the young aboriginal man killed himself.

In response to the premier's comments, Turpel-Lafond said the province bears responsibility for handing off Gervais to an under-funded agency after it closed his group home for health and safety reasons.

"(The agency) got nothing special to meet the needs of this young person. They had nowhere to put him," she said. "If you're going to point one finger at this agency, you should be well-aware that there are four pointing right back at you."

The Fraser Valley agency is one of several in B.C. authorized to provide child protection services through an agreement with the province.

The agency has faced controversy in the past, including in 2002 when two-year-old Chassidy Whitford was killed by her father while under its protection. A provincial review found the girl was allowed to continue living with the man despite unexplained injuries.

Doug Kelly, one of the agency's founders and now chair of the First Nations Health Council, said the organization had been improving over the past decade but the premier's "ill-advised" comments would hurt that progress.

"It's a sham. It's a joke. It's a travesty. It's politics of the worst kind around the death of a child, and the premier is ultimately responsible for that," he said.

Clark did not immediately respond to a request for comment. She is expected to face questioning on the issue from the Opposition New Democrats in the legislature on Wednesday.

Children's Minister Stephanie Cadieux has dismissed the NDP's demands that she resign. Her ministry has been plagued by controversies, including the drug overdose death of a 19-year-old aboriginal teen, identified only as Paige, who had recently aged out of the care system.

The ministry said in a statement Tuesday that it has clear procedures that staff at delegated agencies are expected to follow and the review will determine whether that was done.

The Fraser Valley society called on the ministry to work with it to prevent similar tragedies. It demanded proper residential placements for youth who need extensive support, with a strong aboriginal healing focus and trained First Nations staff.

One aboriginal leader, Cheryl Casimir of the First Nations Summit, said that ultimately the people responsible for handling Gervais's file should face criminal charges.

"It can't just keep happening again. It's like these kids mean nothing to anybody. They mean nothing to this ministry, to this government," she said.

"If they did mean something, we wouldn't be finding ourselves in this situation again."

Direct Link: <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/aboriginal-agency-says-b-c-shifting-blame-in-foster-teen-s-death-1.2586807>

NDP: Trudeau Counting 'Broken Promise' In Funding For First Nations Education

CP | By Kristy Kirkup, The Canadian Press

Posted: 09/29/2015 4:26 pm EDT Updated: 09/29/2015 4:59 pm EDT



OTTAWA — The federal NDP is questioning the way the Liberals have costed their \$2.6-billion pledge for First Nations education, saying the party has promised to top up a Conservative promise that no longer exists.

Ontario NDP candidate Charlie Angus, a longtime advocate for First Nations issues, said the Grit costing documents include a \$1.7-billion shortfall.

"I'm actually very let down that Justin played this game because I thought it was a strong benchmark," Angus said in a phone interview.

Trudeau defended his party's numbers Tuesday at a campaign stop in Winnipeg.

"We have been very clear on this from the initial announcement up to our costing platform," Trudeau said.

"The federal government, under Stephen Harper, announced funding for First Nations education ... that it had actually never spent. It is money that exists within the current budgetary framework but has not been spent yet on First Nations education."

Trudeau said his party intends to top up the unspent money with "hundreds of millions of dollars more every year" to ensure First Nations education is properly funded.

"That is both money that the federal government promised but hasn't spent a penny of yet and money that we are adding because making sure we move toward parity for First Nations education is a goal that all Canadians can understand."

But Angus said the math still doesn't add up.

"The Conservatives promised that money and pulled it back, so it's not there," Angus said.

"He's counting a broken promise as financial numbers so Conservative broken promise, Liberal broken promise ... we need to actually see the dollars so we can build these schools and get kids the math textbooks and the science labs that they need."

First Nations education has long been a bone of contention between aboriginal groups and the Conservative government.

Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, has urged the federal government to return to the table in the wake of an education deal that fell apart during Shawn Atleo's time at the helm of the AFN.

In February 2014, Prime Minister Stephen Harper publicly announced the \$1.9-billion deal with Atleo in front of the national media.

That arrangement unravelled after some aboriginal leaders complained of a lack of consultation, accusing the Conservatives and Atleo of engaging in "back-door dealings."

The controversy ultimately led to Atleo's resignation.

In their budget released this spring, Conservatives earmarked \$200 million a year over five years beginning in 2015-16 for First Nations education.

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/09/29/new-democrats-call-out-liberal-costing-for-first-nations-education_n_8216556.html

New Nunavik youth group has same mandate, fresh vision

"We have all the support we need now," new president says

SARAH ROGERS, September 30, 2015 - 3:15 pm



The Nunavik Youth Forum's new board of directors are pictured here in Montreal earlier this month, following governance training. President Alicia Aragutak is front row, centre, wearing a black jacket and glasses. Next, the organization plans to host consultations with Nunavimmiut youth to help draft an Inuit youth policy. (PHOTO BY TEEVI MACKAY/MAKIVIK CORP)

The head of Nunavik's new youth association says mental health awareness and Inuit cultural values will sit at the top her agenda over the next three years.

But the rest of the association's work will be guided by Nunavik youth themselves, Alicia Aragutak says.

Aragutak, the former director of Tursujuq national park, was acclaimed as the Nunavik Youth Forum's president [earlier this month](#).

“I left a really great job, something I could have set my career on,” said Aragutak. “But I have the heart and the drive to be in politics. I felt I could give more to the region as part of this organization.”

At 24, Aragutak already has a lengthy resumé; apart from her role at Tursujuq park, she’s worked as a management trainer for the Fédération des coopératives du Nouveau-Québec (FCNQ), sat as a municipal and regional councillor and established a community kitchen in her home community of Umiujaq.

But it was while sitting on a Parnasimautik working group in 2013 when Aragutak realized that Nunavimmiut youth had little representation, and plenty of issues worth addressing.

The Nunavik Youth Forum replaces the now-defunct Saputiit Youth Association, which spent the last four years [trying to resolve issues of financial mismanagement](#).

The new youth forum has a smaller board of directors, with coastal, rather than community representatives.

But its mandate remains the same — to represent and advocate for Nunavimmiut aged 15 to 35 at both the regional and community levels.

But to ensure the new organization is responsive to the region’s needs, Aragutak’s first goal is to host consultations on either coast this winter.

“We looked at ways to reach out to all Nunavik communities, to make sure we’re including all youth,” she said. “We’d like them to have a big say in what our youth association does.”

Following the lead of Quebec’s youth secretariat’s work in southern regions, the new group will develop its own Inuit youth policy to inform its future activities.

But the organization is still building itself from scratch; its new directors just completes governance training in Montreal.

Next the association will hire three staff members, an executive director, project manager and an office clerk, to be based in Kuujjuaq.

While the new youth forum is considered its own entity, it is overseen by Makivik Corp., which is providing operational resources to the group.

The Quebec government agreed to re-instate the association’s core funding only if it is integrated under a regional organization and re-established its board of directors.

“Youth were really frustrated with not having an association,” Aragutak said. “I’d like to reassure them that we have all the support we need now. It’s really unfortunate that the last association didn’t have that.”

“But we’ve started off on a really good path.”

The youth association is now looking for a name; Nunavimmiut youth can submit their ideas for an Inuttitut name to the organization’s vice-president Louisa Yeates at louisayeates@gmail.com.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674new_nunavik_youth_group_has_same_mandate_but_fresh_vision/

Christy Clark taking heat for calling out aboriginal agency for 'mistake' in death of teen in foster care

‘What we need now ... is leadership, not politics’

By Laura Kane, THE CANADIAN PRESS September 30, 2015



Alex Gervais plunged to his death from a fourth-floor window of an Abbotsford hotel on Sept. 18. — Dylan Pelly

VANCOUVER — British Columbia Premier Christy Clark is facing mounting criticism for accusing an aboriginal agency of making a "real mistake" that led to the death of a young man in government care outside a hotel.

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"If they did mean something, we wouldn't be finding ourselves in this situation again."

Direct Link:

<http://www.theprovince.com/life/christy+clark+taking+heat+calling+aboriginal+agency+mistake+death+teen+foster+care/11400200/story.html>

Guelph teacher Monique Cadieux looks to First Nations to inspire students

Guelph teacher Monique Cadieux earns Honourable Mention in Toronto Star Teacher of the Year Award for “making a difference” in young lives.



Grade 4/5 teacher Monique Cadieux harvests vegetables in a school garden with her students at Victory Public School in Guelph. Cadieux earned an Honourable Mention in the Toronto Star's Teacher of the Year Awards.

By: [Louise Brown](#) GTA, Published on Thu Oct 01 2015

The plain grey rock on teacher Monique Cadieux's desk is a secret tool for teaching students something remarkable — how to solve fights.

The Talk Rock, an idea this Grade 4/5 teacher at Guelph's Victory Public School borrowed from First Nations traditions, is used to steer young, heated tempers through the kind of respectful discussion that can bring them to a solution — often on their own.

It's just one way this former social worker's classroom nurtures children's souls and social skills, collaboration and confidence, as well as the curriculum.

The focus on student mental health — from teaching kids to “change their mental ‘scripts’ from negative to positive, to posting the five steps of collaboration on the wall — has won her an Honourable Mention in this year's Toronto Star Teacher of the Year Award.

“I don't have rules as much as questions like, “Does your behaviour respect our learning environment?” said Cadieux, who brought her anti-oppression training from working in women's shelters with her 15 years ago when she became a teacher.

While she is not First Nations herself, she said many of the teachings fit her focus on respect, and she starts each year with a smudge ceremony where students wave cleansing sweet sage smoke over them to cleanse their minds and hearts to prepare to learn.

When students have a disagreement, they take the Talk Rock, made of quartz, granite, mica and feldspar, to a table outside in the hall and use it to talk things through.

“Only the person holding the rock can speak, and they pass it around the circle once so each person can have their say and others listen, then pass it around again so they can respond to what was said, and on the third pass they try to reach a resolution and maybe

an apology,” said Cadieux one recent day before taking students outside for a version of Quidditch dodgeball she adapted from the *Harry Potter* books.

“She teaches in a very unique way; she’s very specific,” said Keon Nguyen, 10. “We do fun activities — we love yoga! And the smudge ceremony is very calming; it makes you feel like you can respect others.”

Justine Dainard was one of several parents who nominated Cadieux for the Star award.

“Monique offered her students a powerful taste of how rich Canada’s aboriginal culture is, which is what young Canadians should always be learning but is especially crucial at this point in our history.”

This fall, Cadieux has arranged to have her class train as budding film critics by being the ones who choose the short children’s films to be shown at Guelph’s upcoming Festival of Moving Media. They’ll view the entries, discuss their message and artistic merit and decide which ones make the cut.

It’s one of the many “extras” Dainard cited in her nominating letter. Cadieux pinch-hit for the librarian when she was on leave, and launched book clubs, held daily storytimes and ran a book fair.

She also has created an annual schoolwide enrichment festival one afternoon a week for several weeks where parents and community members come in and share their expertise with multi-age groups of children, from making jam to Lego robotics, calligraphy to claymation.

Says Dainard: “Monique Cadieux is one of those teachers former students will speak about for decades every time they remember the people who made a difference in their lives.”

Direct Link: <http://www.thestar.com/yourtoronto/education/2015/10/01/guelph-teacher-monique-cadieux-looks-to-first-nations-to-inspire-students.html>

Aboriginal Health

Palliative care poor in First Nations communities, researcher says

Researcher blames jurisdictional issues between federal and provincial governments

By Daybreak South, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 24, 2015 7:46 PM PT Last Updated: Sep 25, 2015 12:37 PM PT



Despite a growing preference among Canadians to die at home, Professor Mary Lou Kelley of Lakehead University says this is simply not an option on many First Nations reserves in Canada. (Shaun Best/Reuters)

It's something many Canadians take for granted, but choosing to live out their last days at home is not an option for many First Nations people according to a university researcher studying the issue.

Mary Lou Kelley, a professor at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, says that federal health care dollars that would help First Nations people receive end-of-life care at home have not kept up with the increasing demand.

"I think the federal government needs to step up and make their existing home care program more robust. The funding levels have not been increased since 1999 when the program was first developed," she said.

"All health services in the rest of the country have been increased since 1999, but not home and community care in First Nations. That's a problem."

Health care for First Nations is the responsibility of the federal government, and they do provide some home care services, Kelley said.

She says the problem is that the system was never designed to provide complex health care to people with chronic or advanced terminal diseases.

Jurisdictional issues

Kelley has been studying the issue for the past five years, and says there have been some improvements when it comes to delivering these services.

However, the biggest hurdles are jurisdictional ones. Although provinces feel an obligation to step in and provide adequate health services for other citizens — even those

in rural and remote communities — she says they don't believe they have to do the same for First Nations people.

"The way forward is definitely partnerships between different levels of government," she said. "The provinces need to realize that First Nations citizens are citizens of the province too."

Kelley says her research has shown that local care providers along with experts provided by higher levels of government can provide very effective care plans that allow First Nations peoples to spend their last days at home.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/palliative-care-poor-in-first-nations-communities-researcher-says-1.3242924>

Nunavut suicide inquest: Inuit plead for help to address trauma

To overcome historical injustices Inuit says they need resources to revive language, culture

By Elyse Skura, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 25, 2015 6:04 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 25, 2015 6:04 AM CT



Greiving father Joanasie Akumalik addressed the jury for the last time Thursday at Nunavut's suicide inquest. Yesterday would have been his son Clyde's 12th birthday. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

On the first day of jury deliberations at the Nunavut suicide inquest, the Government of Nunavut and the RCMP called for practical and manageable recommendations, while Inuit organizations argued for broad-reaching goals that would address the territory's many systemic issues.

The jury is tasked with examining the lives of Antonio 'Rex' Uttak and Clyde Akumalik and suggesting how to prevent future deaths by suicide.

"You must not be emotional in your decision-making process," said Kathryn Kellough, the lawyer representing the Akumalik family.

But when Clyde's father Joanasie Akumalik addressed the jury for the last time, a muffled sob sprang from the jury box and several members of the court reached for tissues.

"This evening we would be celebrating Clyde's birthday," Akumalik began.

If he had not died by suicide, Joanasie Akumalik said the family would have had a small celebration.

Close family members would have brought "either with a pot of seal meat or caribou." Then the family might have enjoyed a birthday cake while Clyde and his twin brother Clayton unwrapped small gifts.

"This evening we [cannot] do that."

Change could take years

Over nearly two weeks, the six-person jury has been given several binders full of research, reports and tool kits, which the presiding coroner hopes will guide them in their decision.

The jury can choose to support all or some of the recommendations submitted by expert witnesses and contained in an independent evaluation of the [Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy](#).

Later today, they are expected to return to the courtroom with a series of "brief" and "clear" recommendations to prevent future deaths.

Throughout the inquest, several people have called on the government to put a single person, with the authority to make program commitments, in charge of suicide prevention.

But government lawyer Marsha Gay says any recommendations which require an overhaul of the government structure's budgetary process are "not practical."

She warned that suicide is a "multifaceted" problem, with ties to deeply-rooted societal issues.

"[Changes] may not come instantly. They may not come for years, maybe generations."

Government, RCMP recommendations

The territory said recommendations need to be "doable," citing 10 possibilities that include a public acknowledgement that "suicide is a crisis" and assessments of various training and educational programs.

Last week, expert witness Brian Mishara made an impassioned plea for increased government funding, saying if his daughter were in danger he would give every penny he had.

"What parent wouldn't do that?" said Gay. "Unfortunately, the Government of Nunavut can't do that."

Tracy Carroll presented four recommendations on behalf of the RCMP, including exploring ways to provide more service in Inuktitut and continuing existing community programs that teach proper storage for firearms and ways to recognize signs of childhood sexual abuse.

The lawyer went on to say that "no recommendation for federal government funding should be made."

That's something several witnesses asked for, but Carroll argued the jury does not have enough information about how the Nunavut government and Inuit organizations are using existing funding.

"The GN's [Government of Nunavut's] budget is provided by the federal government according to a territorial funding formula and the federal government provides funding to the Inuit organizations as required under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement," she said.

'Inuit need to heal'

When Kiah Hachey made her submission on behalf of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. she laid much of the blame on historical injustices from the Government of Canada, including attempted assimilation, forced relocation and the residential school system.

The "intergeneration trauma" from these past policies are still causing Inuit intense emotional problems, she argued, and it's the federal government's responsibility to "help Inuit to reclaim our identity, language and custom."

"Inuit need to heal," she said. "We need resources."

The only way to break the cycle, according to Hachey, is to address the complex societal woes that Nunavummiut struggle with: childhood abuse, poor education and food insecurity.

"Early childhood development opportunities, access to quality daycare, access to proper daycare, access to proper nutrition and measures to ensure that children are protected from abuse and neglect will provide protective factors to Nunavut children."

Yvonne Niego, with Nunavut's Embrace Life Council, followed Hachey's call for action.

There are people across the territory who are doing things to address suicide, Niego said, "yet our rates remain still astounding to us all."

The answer, she said, includes improved and sustained funding for community-led programs, which allow residents to find their own ways of dealing with the problem.

"Our elders have requested to reclaim their rightful places in society," she said.

"There is hope and there are ways to embrace life."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-suicide-inquest-inuit-plead-for-help-to-address-trauma-1.3242717>

Study: Inuit Omega-3 Genetic Adaptation Could Change Health Story

[ICTMN Staff](#)

9/25/15

For years the [American Heart Association](#) has suggested eating fatty fish at least twice a week because it is high in omega-3 fatty acids, which the body needs but does not produce.

“Research shows that omega-3 fatty acids reduce inflammation and may help lower risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and arthritis. Omega-3 fatty acids are highly concentrated in the brain and appear to be important for cognitive (brain memory and performance) and behavioral function,” according to the [University of Maryland Medical Center](#).

But all of that is being challenged by a [study published](#) September 18 in the journal Science. The study looked at the genomes of the Inuit population in Greenland, whose diet consists mainly of proteins and fat from fish. Because Arctic peoples have a low rate of heart attack and stroke, [many health experts](#) thought the omega-3 fatty acids were protective.

The recent study looked at the genomes of 191 Inuit in Greenland, 60 Europeans, and 40 Chinese, and found that the Inuit have a genetic variant called FADS, or fatty acid desaturases, that help regulate the fats in our bodies, including omega-3 fatty acids.

Rasmus Nielson, a geneticist at the University of California, Berkeley and one of the authors of the latest study, said this gene variant discovery raised questions about whether

omega-3 fats were protective for everyone. “The same diet may have different effects on different people,” he told the [New York Times](#).

Almost every Inuit who participated in the study had the gene variant, which is far less common in other populations—only two percent of Europeans have it. Researchers who were part of the study believe that the Inuit evolved a way to bring the blood levels back into a healthy balance because they take in so much omega-3. “It seems that a genetic adaptation has counteracted the high intake of omega-3 fatty acids,” Marit E. Jorgensen, an author of the study from the University of South Denmark, told the *New York Times*.

The gene variant did more than change blood levels of fatty acids though, those who carried two copies of the gene, were about an inch shorter and 10 pounds lighter than those who did not have the gene.

The *Times* reports that Nielson and his colleagues plan to continue with their research, and investigate why some metabolize fats more effectively than others, and why omega-3s haven’t necessarily had the heart benefits researchers once hoped they would.

“Very soon, these results could be translated into help for people with their dietary choices,” Dr. Nielsen told the *Times*.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/09/25/study-inuit-omega-3-genetic-adaptation-could-change-health-story-161852>

Nunavut suicide inquest jury retires to draft recommendations

“Think about something we can do tomorrow,” Joanasie Akumalik says

STEVE DUCHARME, September 25, 2015 - 8:00 am



Joanasie Akumalik: “Have you ever lost something valuable? I have,” Akumalik said of his son, Clyde, who died by suicide Oct. 12, 2013. (FILE PHOTO)



Clyde Api Akumalik, whose death by suicide in 2013 is one of two such deaths that came under scrutiny at a special coroner's inquest on suicide in Iqaluit. As of Sept. 25, a six-person jury was still deliberating over recommendations. (FILE PHOTO)

Joanasie Akumalik delivered a heartfelt speech on [his son's death](#) to jury members of a coroner's inquest on suicide Sept. 24 before they departed to draft a series of recommendations to address Nunavut's atrociously high rate of suicide.

“Have you ever lost something valuable? I have,” Akumalik told the jury.

“This evening we will be celebrating Clyde's birthday very quietly... when we lose something valuable, it's hard. When you lose your son it's even harder.”

The Akumaliks are one of the two families affected by suicide who participated in the inquest, which began Sept. 14 and has explored — through testimony from mental health experts, government officials and frontline responders — the underlying social problems in Nunavut that produced a record 45 suicides in 2013.

Jury members are expected to weigh in on several contested issues brought to light during the inquest and offer recommendations based on that testimony to presiding coroner Garth Eggenberger on Sept. 25.

“Think about something we can do tomorrow,” said an emotional Akumalik.

Legal representatives from the government, Inuit organizations and other members of the failed suicide prevention partnership were also allowed to give their own recommendations and comments to the jury before deliberations began.

“NTI [Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.] agrees with the recommendations that there is a need for an entity at the working level within the GN [Government of Nunavut] that is given the mandate and authority to lead implementation on the next action plan in collaboration with all partners,” NTI health and policy analyst Kiah Hachey told the jury.

Jurors will have to decide whether to stay with the existing suicide prevention strategy and action plan or instead recommend a new endeavor starting from scratch.

“My submission is that’s something to build on, not to redo. There’s been an action plan put in place, it’s been evaluated, and there’s a number of good recommendations for revitalizing that plan going forward,” said Shelton Toner, legal counsel to the coroner.

Legal representatives were unanimous in acknowledging the importance of the 42 recommendations set out in the suicide action plan evaluation.

There were mixed messages, however, on who would pay for any necessary suicide prevention infrastructure moving forward.

“In the absence of a solid factual foundation, it is not possible to base a recommendation directed at the federal government to increase funding to any particular government or organization,” said RCMP lawyer Tracy Carol.

She said any recommendation for funding from Ottawa is uninformed without knowing what the GN and Inuit organizations have already set aside for suicide prevention: they were not disclosed at the inquest.

“These policies [attempts of assimilation, forced relocation, residential schools] have contributed to the state of Inuit society today and contributed to the high rates of suicide that we’re seeing,” said Hachey.

“As these were the Crown’s initiatives at the time, they hold the fiduciary responsibility to continue to provide continuous multi-year funding and programming regarding suicide prevention in partnership with Inuit organizations.”

Chuck Birchall, representing the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, also questioned the absence of the federal government at the inquest when indigenous suicide was such a central subject in the Truth and Reconciliation Committee report [released in Ottawa in June](#).

The coroner's legal counsel advised the jury to add time frames whenever possible to their recommendations, and not to be afraid of attaching dollar signs to initiatives despite the rhetoric.

"The government has detailed rules around budgeting," Toner explained to the jury. "But, if you make recommendations that are going to cost money, and that need to be carried out, if there is sufficient political will to make those things happen — the budget can be made to happen."

Other issues the jury might address in their recommendations include:

- incorporating suicide specific education and coping courses into the school system;
- suggesting that mandatory cultural orientation and grief counseling programs be provided to frontline workers in law enforcement and healthcare;
- improving prevention and "post-vention" treatment in communities; and,
- strengthening interdepartmental communication to detect and treat people deemed at-risk for completing or attempting suicide.

The jury is expected to provide their set of recommendations to the presiding coroner Sept 25, although no hard deadline has been set if jurors decide to take more time to deliberate.

People who struggle with suicidal thoughts may contact the Kamatsiaqtut help line in Iqaluit at (867) 979-3333 or toll-free at 1(800) 265-3333, from 7 p.m. to midnight.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_suicide_inquest_jury_retires_to_draft_recommendations/

Combating suicide in Nunavut

Inquest aims to stem high rates in North

By Joe O'Connor, National Post September 28, 2015



People make their way through the -46°C with wind chill temperatures in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The suicide rate among Inuit children, aged 11-14, is about 50 times the national average. Of the 45 suicides in 2013, 12 were women and 33 were men, mostly aged 15-25. These statistics prompted a special coroner's inquest that wrapped up on Sept. 25.

Rex Uttak liked to laugh, especially when his aunt, Mary Ann Uttak, got him going, as she loved to do, because he could get her right back by cracking a joke or doing something silly. Then they would both start laughing until their eyes watered, and they would try to choke back their giggles until the next joke flew.

That was Rex, says his aunt, an 11-year-old boy full of laughter and light. Mary Ann remembers coming home on Aug. 10, 2013, and seeing her nephew and one of his cousins asleep on a living-room couch.

She touched his cheek and whispered good night. By the next morning he was dead. The boy who liked to laugh had hanged himself.

Rex Uttak was one of 45 Nunavut Inuit to kill themselves in 2013, a cascade of tragedies that triggered a special coroner's inquest into the high rate of suicide in the North that convened in Iqaluit on Sept. 14 and concluded last Friday.

Since 1999, 479 Inuit have killed themselves in the territory - by hanging, gun, overdose and stabbing - out of a population of about 28,000.

To put the numbers in perspective: an Inuit age 15 and older is 9.8 times more likely to commit suicide than a Canadian living in the south, while the suicide rate among Inuit children, aged 11-14, is about 50 times the national average. Of the 45 suicides in 2013, 12 were women and 33 were men, mostly aged 15-25.

Rex Uttak was the youngest, the oldest was 72.

"Rex was such a happy boy," his aunt says. "We wanted to tell our family's story to try and help others."

Padma Suramala, the territory's coroner, originally hoped five families affected by the 2013 suicides would come forward, but only two did in the end.

Doing so wasn't easy for the Uttaks. Mary Ann Uttak fears the word - suicide - as much as the act, has become rooted in the formative experiences of Inuit young people.

Rex Uttak wasn't the first member of his family to kill himself. His older brother, Bernie, committed suicide, as did an aunt. His older sister was murdered. Dr. Allison Crawford, a psychiatrist who has been working with Nunavut's mental health system for the past decade, testified during week one of the inquest. She explains in an environment where suicide has, in essence, become a cultural norm, it is sometimes described as a "contagion." "I think the word 'contagion' scares people, because people do start to be worried about young people in their family catching suicide - or it to be an epidemic in that way - but suicide doesn't work that way," Crawford says.

"But what we do have evidence of is exposure. Where, if you are a young person and you know someone that has ended their life by suicide, there is an elevated risk that you will, in turn, end your life by suicide."

This holds true for young people, north and south. A student, say, at a Calgary high school where someone has committed suicide is at greater risk, statistically, of doing the same. Meanwhile many of the factors associated with a young person's suicide - depression, substance abuse, overwhelming feelings of hopelessness and despair - are also common, north and south.

But the difference is the magnitude of the problem. Understanding it in a northern context requires digging into the past. Suicide was virtually unheard of among the Inuit historically. RCMP records for 1920-45 documented just 27 suicides throughout the Northwest Territories. Of that number, only one was a youth.

Most of the cases involved adults with acute physical or mental distress. As one elder explained to the Igoolik Oral History Project, suicide happened "once in a long while ... when a person was ill for so long that they got tired of living." Jack Anawak, 64, hails from Repulse Bay, the same community as Rex Uttak.

Anawak grew up hunting and trapping. By age 17, he had a family and a sled dog team and a traditional male role to fill, where the food his wife and children ate was the food he went out and killed.

But in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, the wild, untamed North became a Canadian colonial laboratory. By strokes of the pen, the federal government transformed a society of hunters and gatherers into one of people living in isolated permanent settlements, shopping for groceries at a store.

Anawak draws a straight line between the rapid societal transformation and the muddying of traditional male roles to the suicides of his two brothers, who killed themselves in the span of a few months in 1977.

"I had never been exposed to suicide before that," he says. "To me, that seemed to be the beginning, and it was usually young men committing suicide." (It still is young men.)

Many in Anawak's generation spent time in residential schools. Few talked about it. Instead, they drank, took drugs and raged as their families and cultural traditions fell apart, dissolving in a haze of substance, physical and sexual abuse.

The cycle of abuse and despair became self-perpetuating, passing from one generation to the next. Children suffered. Suicide rates soared. Here we are today.

"Look, we have the highest suicide rate in Canada," says Anawak, a former Liberal MP turned NDP candidate in the upcoming election. "Our leadership should be shouting about it from the hilltops. 'Let's make suicide prevention our No. 1 issue.'" Anawak isn't merely playing politics. One critical aspect in the continuing suicide epidemic has been the Nunavut government's colossal failure to deal with the problem.

Several community stakeholders, including the government, the Nunavut land claims organization, the RCMP and a suicide prevention group, came together in 2008 to develop an official suicide prevention strategy for the region.

The strategy was made public two years later. It called for: better access to beefed-up mental health services; suicide-intervention training for those on the front lines of the crisis - police, teachers, community leaders, parents; improving maternal health and childhood opportunities; and mobilizing government departments to "transform the way suicide prevention happens in Nunavut."

But there was a catch: the plan was not specifically funded. Five years later, much of the strategy remains to be implemented. "The government deserves to be shamed for this," Crawford says.

Crawford views the inquest as a positive step forward, an indication that an uncomfortable subject has been pushed to the forefront of the territorial conversation. But some taboos remain intact.

"Child sexual abuse is another huge problem," she says. "But nobody is willing to talk about it."

Mary Ann Uttak returned to Repulse Bay after appearing at the inquest. The 27-year-old has three children, aged nine, five and two. She worries about them constantly. Sometimes she will speak to her eldest child about life, and how hard it can seem at times, but that things always get better.

When she thinks of her nephew, Rex, she hears his laugh.

"We are trying to be happy," she says. "We are trying to be strong."

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/news/combating+suicide+nunavut/11396271/story.html>

New health care facility to help Inuit patients travelling to Montreal



CTV Montreal

Published Tuesday, September 29, 2015 9:52PM EDT

Last Updated Wednesday, September 30, 2015 7:13AM EDT

Patients from northern Quebec will soon have a convenient place to stay while waiting to see a doctor in the Montreal area.

The city of Dorval broke ground Tuesday on a new residence for Inuit who need specialized health care.

The new facility will include 143 beds for patients and a caregiver who may have to travel with them from Nunavik to Montreal for treatment.

Dorval Mayor Edgar Rouleau was at the groundbreaking and explained why Dorval was a great choice.

"Being close to the airport is an ideal spot. We're very happy that they're coming here and for sure it will improve the site," he said.

Currently Inuit patients travelling to Montreal stay at the YMCA on Tupper St.

There are issues with the downtown location, however, said Nunavik Regional Health and Social Services executive director Minnie Grey.

“A lot of people are exposed to drugs and alcohol so this is a much better environment,” she said.

The groundbreaking ceremony began with a prayer of thanks and a hope that the community's needs will be met.

“We have small hospitals but for other urgent matters and other specialties the people from Nunavik have to come for care here,” said Grey.

It can be difficult to travel for treatment, and doubly so in unfamiliar surroundings, so the centre will offer plenty of amenities for patients and caregivers.

“They will be served meals. We'll be serving them our traditional foods and there'll be playgrounds,” said Grey.

Construction on the \$35 million residence begins next week. It should be finished sometime next year.

Direct Link: <http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/new-health-care-facility-to-help-inuit-patients-travelling-to-montreal-1.2587607>

Aboriginal Identity & Representation

Manitoba working to preserve Aboriginal languages

Flin Flon Reminder
September 24, 2015 09:00 PM

The Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy aims to create a partnership agreement to keep Aboriginal languages alive, establish an Indigenous research group focusing on those languages, and develop a communication strategy to promote them.

The strategy will further develop a system for sharing resources and expertise, and promote and develop teacher training with the goal of producing more fluent speakers/teachers.

“Language is a critical component of cultural identity, and the Manitoba government recognizes the importance of working with our partners in the Indigenous community to protect and promote Aboriginal languages,” Education and Advanced Learning Minister

James Allum said in a news release. “This partnership agreement will provide us with a framework to ensure our language strategy reflects the diversity of Indigenous communities throughout this province.”

The strategy was developed with the guidance of elder representatives from all seven Aboriginal language groups recognized in Manitoba: Cree, Dene, Michif, Ojibwe, Inuktitut, Dakota and Oji-Cree.

The strategy stems from recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report made earlier this year, Allum said.

Partners in the strategy include Frontier School Division, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, and University College of the North and both Winnipeg universities, among others.

- See more at: <http://www.thereminder.ca/news/local-news/manitoba-working-to-preserve-aboriginal-languages-1.2067238#sthash.E8uf1sjQ.dpuf>

Not your typical beauty queen

Sarrah Le Marquand

September 27, 2015 12:00AM



“I’m not your typical beauty queen,” says Mrs Universe winner Ashley Callingbull. “Look out ... I have a voice for change and I’m going to use it!” (Pic: Supplied)

It’s said beauty is in the eye of the beholder — a truism that does not extend to beauty pageants, however, where it is in the eye of a panel of judges charged with carefully scrutinising the mandatory swimwear competition.

But the bikini-clad contestants of the pageantry world are slowly challenging the edict that showcasing a seamlessly applied fake tan and sequinned evening gown is the sum total of their contribution.

The recently crowned Mrs Universe — a rival to the more conventional Miss Universe pageant — was quick to use her platform to make a political call to arms to her fellow Canadians.

“I urge all First Nations people in Canada to vote in this upcoming election,” Ashley Callingbull, herself a First Nations woman, implored on Twitter. “We are in desperate need of a new PM. Fight for your rights.”

Her outspoken views are a notable departure from the cautiously worded platitudes espoused by most beauty queens, who tend not to engage in political commentary any more searing than vague calls for world peace.

“Did you really think I was going to just sit there and look pretty? Definitely not,” a defiant Callingbull later wrote on her Facebook page. “I’m not your typical beauty queen. Look out ... I have a voice for change and I’m going to use it!”

Reinventing what’s expected of a typical beauty queen is also the driving force behind Mashable’s recently unveiled Real Miss America series, whose contenders for a tiara include a transgender activist, a lesbian reverend, an Iraq war veteran and an Arab-American comic.

“No more celebrating a woman’s potential only when we can score her body and beauty,” declared Mashable. “Instead, we are recognising people who have dedicated their lives to equality and fairness, and who are expanding the definition of womanhood.”

But there might even be hope for the mainstream pageants, with self-confessed Miss America viewer Jennifer Weiner writing in the New York Times of the expectation her daughters will grow up to an increasingly diverse beauty parade.

“Maybe, if their Miss Americas are like 2014’s Nina Davuluri, the first Indian-American winner, who has said the ‘girl next door is evolving as the diversity in America evolves,’” she wrote, “...they’ll internalise different messages than the ones I swallowed, and grow up believing that there are many different ways to be beautiful.”

Direct Link: <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/rendezview/not-your-typical-beauty-queen/story-fnpug1jf-1227544242121>

Craig Kielburger: The Way Canada Thinks About Aboriginal Peoples Is A Disservice

The Huffington Post Canada | By [Brian Vinh Tien Trinh](#)

Posted: 10/01/2015 9:05 am EDT Updated: 10/01/2015 9:59 am EDT



Craig Kielburger says it's time Canadians rethink their views on the country's aboriginal population.

The co-founder of [Free the Children](#) has spent much of his life helping communities in developing countries become self-sustaining. The organization takes a five-pillar approach to tackle issues surrounding education, health care, food security, small jobs creation and clean water.

But Kielburger says that when FTC sat down with indigenous leaders in Canada to see if the organization's programs were a fit for aboriginal communities, they heard the same important message repeatedly.

"We'd hear things like, 'It's not charity, it's a treaty obligation. We're not looking for hand-outs. We don't want kids across Canada raising spare pennies to send to aboriginal communities,'" Kielburger told The Huffington Post Canada ahead of [We Day Toronto 2015](#). "Instead, what we kept hearing was this idea of empowerment and leadership development," he added.

"So often when Canada talks about our aboriginal population, we frame it as problems to be solved. And I think that's a disservice. I think we need to see aboriginal populations as problem solvers."

Kielburger said empowerment has been the basis for the FTC programs that support aboriginal youth in Canada. Find out more about how they tie into We Day, of which AOL Canada (HuffPost Canada's parent company) is a sponsor, [in the video above](#).

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/10/01/craig-kielburger-aboriginal-people-canada_n_8223902.html

Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

Chris Cousins trial: former Qulliq Energy president Peter Mackey testifies

Says Cousins' allegations that QEC was not adhering to Inuit employment guidelines were not true

By Jane Sponagle, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 01, 2015 7:21 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 01, 2015 7:21 AM CT



A former employee of the Qulliq Energy Corporation who says he was wrongfully dismissed is taking on the public utility in a civil lawsuit this week in Iqaluit. (John Van Dusen/CBC)

Peter Mackey, the former president and CEO of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, says a former employee made false allegations that the organization was not adhering to Inuit employment guidelines and that he needed to be disciplined.

Chris Cousins is suing the corporation for \$500,000. He says he had to leave his job at the corporation in March 2011 after four disciplinary actions against him, which he says stemmed from his defence of Inuit employment.

Mackey testified Wednesday that Cousins was a "valuable" and "knowledgeable" employee, but that allegations Cousins had about QEC not adhering to Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement — which is aimed at increasing Inuit employment in the government — were not true and needed to be addressed.

The corporation argues the series of letters, warnings and finally a suspension and demotion were part of a progressive discipline.

The court heard earlier this week that a fact finding meeting took place on Jan. 13, 2011 between Cousins and former director of human resources Catherine Cronin, former labour relations leader Francis Leger and director of operations Dave Clark. According to an email sent from Leger to Cousins, one point Leger hoped to resolve was Cousins' "continuing campaign to discredit QEC."

Mackey testified he did not take part in the meeting or decision making to suspend and demote Cousins. He said he was unsure if he was informed about the meetings with Cousins, and another former QEC employee Joe Sageatook.

Mackey said he was made aware of the meetings only after the fact through an email sent by Leger. In that email, Leger asked both Cousins and Sageatook about the purpose of their recent visit to the home of the Minister Responsible for the QEC. Leger wrote both men denied any knowledge of the visit.

On Tuesday, Clark testified Cousins was never directly questioned about that visit.

Earlier this week, the court heard that on Jan. 14, 2011, Cousins received a letter stating he would be suspended without pay for 30 working days, demoted from his maintenance supervisor role to a non-supervisory position, and would have to attend anger management training. His suspension would begin Jan. 17.

On Wednesday, Mackey testified he was out of town the day the suspension letter was drafted. Initially, he said he would have been aware of his staff's decision on this matter. But when questioned by Phil Hunt, Cousins' lawyer, about his level of awareness, Mackey said he did not "recollect specifically."

Mackey testified that when he was back in the office on Jan. 21, he sent a letter confirming Cousins' suspension. He said he would have used the guidance and advice of his staff in that decision.

Mackey was questioned by Hunt about a disciplinary action against Cousins in October 2010. Mackey denied a request by Leger to demote Cousins for six months to a non-supervisory role.

Court was adjourned until Thursday because QEC's third witness, Cronin, was not available to testify Wednesday. The lawyer for QEC said Cronin had contracted food poisoning from seafood linguine.

Leger will also testify Thursday by video link from Quebec. He broke several ribs this summer and cannot travel to Iqaluit.

The trial is expected to wrap up on Friday.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/chris-cousins-trial-former-qulliq-energy-president-peter-mackey-testifies-1.3251730>

Aboriginal Politics

Iqaluit votes 2015: Megan Pizzo Lyall wants more communication

'The most prominent issue is the communication between the administration and council'

By Kieran Oudshoorn, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 25, 2015 5:26 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 25, 2015 5:26 AM CT



Megan Pizzo Lyall says Iqaluit city council needs fresh perspectives and that's why she's running for a council seat. (Kieran Oudshoorn/CBC)

Megan Pizzo Lyall says Iqaluit city council needs fresh perspectives and that's why she's running for a council seat.

Pizzo Lyall says council also needs to focus on cooperation so it can start working towards long-term solutions.

"There has been a huge lack of communication," she says, "not just within council, but with the mayor to council, the mayor to Iqalumiut, and the most prominent issue is the communication between the administration and council."

Pizzo Lyall says building consensus is key, and only through cooperation will council be able to address the city's debt and infrastructure deficit. She says she's particularly concerned with problems she sees with its waste management.

"The landfill is an issue. You know if you drive out there everybody can see in plain sight that it's a mess and same with the sewage system," Pizzo Lyall says.

Pizzo Lyall is originally from Taloyoak but has lived in Iqaluit for the last eight years. She's a graduate of both Nunavut Sivuniksavut and the Environmental Technology Program at Nunavut Arctic College. She currently works for the Qikiqtani Inuit Association.

"I was raised on Inuk values," Pizzo Lyall says. "I grew up hunting, camping and fishing so my priorities were always with the land and respecting my elders and working together as people to make sure everybody is heard."

Nine people are running for Iqaluit city council, as well as three for mayor, in the Oct. 19 municipal election. CBC North will profile all 12 candidates.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/iqaluit-votes-2015-megan-pizzo-lyall-wants-more-communication-1.3242515>

Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq elected national chief of Congress of Aboriginal Peoples

By [Richard Dooley](#) Global News, September 25, 2015 4:06 pm



Dwight Dorey, National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal People (CAP).

HALIFAX – A Mi'kmaq business man from Cole Harbour has been elected national chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

Dwight Dorey was elected Friday during the organization's annual general meeting in Gatineau, Quebec.

Dorey will replace former national chief Betty Ann Lavallee who is stepping down to deal with family health concerns affecting her parents and husband.

Dorey served as national chief of CAP from 2000 to 2006.

He's also the owner of ABCAN Affairs Group, a national consulting firm specializing in Aboriginal relations. He's also written two books on Aboriginal legal matters.

The Congress of Aboriginal People is the national advocacy group for the interests of off-reserve Status and non-Status Indians, the Southern Inuit of Labrador and Metis Peoples.

Dorey is taking the reins of the organization at a critical time.

In early October the Supreme Court of Canada will hear the case of *Daniels v. Canada* a case that will decide if Metis and non-Status Indians are Indians as defined under the Constitution Act of 1867.

Dorey said the case is a turning point and vows to see it implemented while he is in office.

Direct Link: <http://globalnews.ca/news/2241939/nova-scotia-mikmaq-elected-national-chief-of-congress-of-aboriginal-peoples/>

CEMA votes against disbanding, but can't avoid uncertain future

By [Vincent McDermott](#)

Thursday, September 24, 2015 5:28:40 MDT PM



A group of First Nation and Metis elders gather at a barbecue at the McMurray Metis office in Fort McMurray, Alta. on Thursday August 13, 2015. The group of hunters, trappers, fishermen and elders were participating in a consulting panel with CEMA. Vincent McDermott/Fort McMurray Today/Postmedia Network

With their finances in question and the oil industry dismissing them as irrelevant, the Cumulative Environmental Management Association has voted to continue operating, despite having no guaranteed funding next year.

After a Thursday morning meeting, several CEMA board members confirmed aboriginal and non-governmental stakeholders voted against disbanding the organization. Industry stakeholders voted in favour of dissolving, while the provincial government abstained. The motion to dissolve CEMA needed 75% approval to pass.

The Fort McMurray-based organization will continue operating for the remainder of the year. Monitoring and research projects are scheduled to conclude, without interruption.

But the vote does not dismiss the fact that, with no major source of income for 2016, CEMA's 13-year run could be nearing an end.

"Right now we have to decide what a future for CEMA looks like," said Dan Stuckless, executive director of CEMA and a senior environment and regulatory affairs manager with the Fort McKay First Nation.

For privacy reasons, Stuckless could not mention how members voted, but confirmed it was a close vote.

"Some of what we'll have to look at includes some decisions from the board, deciding what to do with no funding next year. We'll be reconvening in the next few weeks," he said. "Hopefully we can keep everyone together and keep the essence of what some people feel is an important tool alive."

Almost all of CEMA's \$5-million annual budget comes from industry stakeholders, but earlier this summer, [CEMA's board of directors were informed industry would no longer financially support the organization. The Alberta NDP told the board it would not make up any financial shortfall.](#)

"In my view, it is appropriate for CEMA board members to determine their own fate," said Alberta Environment Minister Shannon Phillips during a brief Thursday afternoon interview. "At the end of the day, we made our preference known that we want to see their best work carry forward."

Industry stakeholders and lobby groups like the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers argue CEMA's mandate has been succeeded by initiatives like the Canadian Oil Sands Innovation Alliance and the federal-provincial Joint Oil Sands Monitoring program.

CEMA rejects this view, arguing they are the only independent multi-stakeholder group proposing environmental policies in the oilsands. Aboriginal stakeholders argue no other monitoring group gives them a voice like CEMA.

Phillips says the government hoped CEMA would vote against disbanding and feels a multi-stakeholder organization is needed in the oilsands. But changes in government and global energy politics has the province reevaluating CEMA's role.

Next month, Phillips will pitch a government-led multi-stakeholder model to members. Stuckless says the board is aware one of CEMA's survival options could be absorption into a new organization. Terry Abel, CAPP's director of oilsands, says industry is also interested in the proposal.

"I think it's a sign of respect from the minister's office, knowing our members are well informed on oilsands and environmental issues, and have a role to play," said Stuckless.

“We’ll see closer to the date if things have changed, but we do want to meet again to put our own options on the table.”

Direct Link: <http://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/2015/09/24/cema-votes-against-disbanding-but-cant-avoid-uncertain-future>

Indian Act hampers First Nations accountability, expert says

'The guys trying to look after the reserve are hurting our people,' First Nation member says

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 25, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 25, 2015 3:08 PM ET



The imposition of an 'inherently flawed' form of Indian Act governance means some First Nations citizens must turn to acts of protest to ensure accountability in their communities, says the director of the Centre for Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University in Toronto. (CBC News)

Some community members in Wabaseemoong First Nation, near Kenora, Ont., are alleging financial mismanagement in the local administration office, but the community's financial advisor says everything is in order.

Kerry Carpenter sent copies of cheque stubs, cheque requisitions and pages of the ledger from the Wabaseemoong First Nation to CBC News. He said they show that money intended for social services for the whole community is being misspent.

The First Nation's [most recent audit is available on the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development website](#). Wabaseemoong's financial advisor, Harry Green, said the information collected by Carpenter is old, and "has no bearing" on the First Nation's current financial status.

"A little bit of information can be a dangerous thing," Green said.

But Carpenter remains steadfast in his concerns.



Hayden King is the director of the Centre for Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University in Toronto.

"I'm speaking out," Carpenter said. "Yes, I'll get people upset for telling the truth: there is injustice in our community, people are suffering in our communities."

Carpenter said he is especially concerned about the children in Wabaseemoong, also known as Whitedog First Nation.

"That's a lot of money that should be used for the problems in our community, the lack of housing," he said. "Who do you blame, the kid sitting on the side of the road or the sniffer in the bush? It's the leadership. The guys trying to look after the reserve are hurting our people."

The auditor provided a qualified opinion of Wabaseemoong's financial statements, noting in particular questions around a \$500,000 loan to Wincrief Forestry Products. The company filed for bankruptcy protection and the First Nation is pursuing a lawsuit to recover the value of the loan, according to auditor BDK and Company.

Edward McDonald, of Wabaseemoong, told CBC News he'd like police to review the First Nation's books and the documents Carpenter has obtained.

'We don't have that trust'

"We need a change of leadership that can be accountable, that we can trust," McDonald said. "Right now, we don't have that trust."

But accountability for First Nations under the Indian Act is a one way street that leads away from community members, according to Hayden King, the director for the Centre of Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University in Toronto.

"So when we do see issues of accountability and transparency, a lot of times it has to do with this governance structure whereby the community leaders aren't really working for the community, they're working for INAC (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), they're reporting to INAC," he said.

The imposed system of governance doesn't always mesh well with traditional lines of responsibility, King said.

"You have very small communities, some of which still adhere to subtle forms of clan governance," he said. "So without the proper protocols you might have cases where communities are dominated by large families and that might exclude other members of communities."

'This is not a general trend'

King stressed that financial mismanagement is rare in First Nations.

"I think that it's pretty remarkable that we have this awful form of governance imposed on communities through the Indian Act and we don't see more corruption," he said. "I think that's the surprising thing. This is not a general trend."

Many First Nations in Ontario are attempting to address accountability and transparency in traditional ways, he said.

"Some communities are trying to resurrect dispute resolution policies, decision-making policies," King said. "I call them policies, but in effect they are legal orders internal to communities that have been used for many, many generations."

It's not clear how those authentic forms of governance will fit with the "inherently flawed" Indian Act rules for chief and council, he added.

Concerned citizens, like Carpenter, have had to resort to public protests in First Nations where internal forms of accountability are not being instituted, King said.

For his part, Carpenter remains optimistic that his efforts will result in positive change.

"We're going to make noises and make a thunder cloud, gather all the clouds together," Carpenter said. "And hopefully we have a good storm and hopefully after that there will be clearing and we'll see positive things in our community."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/indian-act-hampers-first-nations-accountability-expert-says-1.3241602>

Time for new chief, says head of Mi'kmaq First Nations Assembly

[Cory Hurley](#)

Published on September 25, 2015

Dave Wells says change is needed at the top of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band.



From left, Diann George, Glenda Buckle and Keith Cormier perform a drumming ceremony during the opening of the Mi'kmaq First Nations Assembly's Corner Brook office on Thursday.

Wells, president of the Mi'kmaq First Nations Assembly of Newfoundland, wants the chief of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band, Brendan Sheppard, defeated in the upcoming election. He made the statement as the Mi'kmaq First Nations Assembly opened its office in Corner Brook.

However, he did say the assembly would work with whomever is at the helm following the band's October election.

“What we hope for is, going forward after this election — whomever is chief — an opportunity for all people to come together, and it not just be a small selection,” Wells said. “We are really looking for an inclusion of everybody with aboriginal ancestry.”

Many of the applicants rejected for membership into the Qalipu band, or being reviewed, have been at odds with Sheppard, who has voiced his support for the supplemental agreement on the enrolment between the Federation of Newfoundland Indians and the federal government.

With the Qalipu immersed in an election campaign, there are members of the assembly who are voting members of the Qalipu, and others have been vocal in who they would support if they were.

Wells though, said the assembly is officially just watching with interest as the campaign and election unfolds.

There are about 5,000 paid members now, and the establishment of the office is another step forward, said the president. The office is not just a presence, but also a place where members can enroll and fellowship opportunities can be planned and hosted.

The Mi'kmaq First Nations Assembly of Newfoundland scored a victory in its fight against the enrolment process for the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band in September. A federal court in Ottawa ruled in its favour with regards to a request to set aside the

decisions of the enrolment committee to reject the applications of Alex Howse and Sterling Foster.

As exciting as the opening of the office is, Wells acknowledges he hopes it is a temporary one.

“We want everybody to be accepted into one,” he said. “Get rid of this (office), let us fold, and become part of the Qalipu band.”

The assembly office is located at 51 West St.

Direct Link: <http://www.thewesternstar.com/News/Local/2015-09-25/article-4288788/Time-for-new-chief,-says-head-of-Mi%26rsquo%3Bkmaq-First-Nations-Assembly/1>

Daphne Bramham: First Nations candidates' loyalties span the four parties

Record number of aboriginals running for federal office

By Daphne Bramham, Vancouver Sun September 24, 2015



Brenda Sayers, federal Green Party candidate in North Island-Powell River

Assembly of First Nations' Grand Chief Perry Bellegarde publicly agonized over whether to vote in the federal election. But there was never any doubt what the 37 aboriginal candidates were going to do election day.

It is the largest number of indigenous candidates ever and their loyalties span the four parties.

The majority are running for the NDP and the Liberals with 15 each. Four are Green candidates and three are running for the Conservatives, including incumbents Leona Aglukkaq and Rob Clarke.

Some are running in rural ridings with reserves; some in urban ridings where there is a significant and growing percentage of First Nations and Metis voters.

Still others are running in ridings where it's not inconceivable that when the candidate shows up on the doorstep, it will be the first time that some residents will have spoken to a First Nations person.

Three First Nations candidates are running in British Columbia — Liberal Jody Wilson-Raybould in Vancouver Granville, NDP Carleen Thomas in North Vancouver and Green Brenda Sayers in North Island-Powell River.

All three believe their different perspectives as aboriginal people with different cultures and traditions are missing from the debates in Ottawa. All three want the new government to honour the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

But that's only a part of their reason for running. All three believe their experience as chiefs and councillors is easily transferable and is a valuable asset for the broader constituencies that they seek to represent.

As regional chief for the AFN, Wilson-Raybould was deeply involved in talks with the prime minister and key government officials during the heady days of Idle No More when Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence was fasting and protests were being held across the country.

She decided to run because she left those meetings disillusioned about democracy and the ability of individuals and groups to be heard in this country.

Thomas and Sayers were drawn into federal politics because of two specific issues that have consumed much of their time and energy over the last few years.

As an elected member of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Thomas helped set up the Sacred Trust Initiative to oppose the TransMountain pipeline, which would result in twice the oil tanker traffic up Burrard Inlet and through English Bay.

"People would ask me what to do to help and I would tell them to talk to their (municipal) councillors, their MLAs and their MPs," Thomas says. "And then I began to think maybe I needed to walk my own talk."

For Sayers, the catalyst was the Canada-China foreign investment promotion and protection (FIPPA) agreement. Sayers led the Hupacasath First Nation's unsuccessful court challenge to stop its ratification.

The 31-year agreement was signed without parliamentary debate by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in Vladivostok in 2014.

Sayers and the Hupacasath argued in Federal Court that the FIPPA undermines the ability of First Nations to say no to resource development by allowing Chinese companies to sidestep the legal obligation to consult with them.

Other groups including the Council of Canadians, B.C. Federation of Labour, the Canadian Auto Workers, West Coast Environmental Law and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs supported the Hupacasath's case.

Yet while all candidates face questions about why they're running, for aboriginal candidates, the question can take on a decidedly ugly undertone.

Sayers and Thomas say they have not experienced racism on the campaign. But they've heard other candidates mention it.

Even though Wilson-Raybould has lived most of her life in the riding, voters have asked why they should vote for an aboriginal candidate.

"If I were some other race or ethnicity, it's not a question that I would have been asked as often as I am," she says.

Since Wilson-Raybould started campaigning 15 months ago, she's also been asked whether she pays taxes. Yes, she does and so do most of Canada's 1.4 million aboriginal people. Fewer than half are eligible for tax exemptions, which apply only to status Indians living and working on reserves.

Wilson-Raybould has also had to rebut the suggestion that she got her law degree for free.

"I'm conscious of some people having concerns or false impressions," says Wilson-Raybould. "There is an undercurrent of racism, but I think that people just lack the information and the understanding."

In a country that prides itself on multiculturalism, it seems Canadians still have a lot to learn from its first peoples.

dbamhamcface fontname="Light" naxe="0" iaxis="0"/>37 — Number of candidates across Canada

16 — Number of aboriginal people who have been elected to the House of Commons

1960 — The year First Nations people were first allowed to vote in federal elections

1968 — The year that Kamloops-Cariboo voters elected Len Marchand, Canada's first aboriginal MP

1.4 million — Number of aboriginal Canadians

1.49 million — Number of Canadians of Chinese origin

20 — Percentage increase in the number of aboriginal people from 2006 to the 2011 census

28 — Percentage of total aboriginal population under the age of 15

0.7 — Percentage of indigenous people in Metro Vancouver

Sources: Elections Canada; House of Commons; Census; Statistics Canada

Direct Link:

<http://www.theprovince.com/life/daphne+bramham+first+nations+candidates+loyalties+span+four/11388464/story.html>

Cuthand: First Nations don't fit 'old stock' definition

By Doug Cuthand, The StarPhoenix September 25, 2015



Doug Cuthand

The leaders' debate last week on the economy was a real snooze fest. Just when I was nodding off, Conservative Leader Stephen Harper made an oblique reference to "old stock Canadians."

Aha, I figured. The topic has finally got around to aboriginal issues. But as it turned out Harper was referring to the issue of health-care benefits for immigrants and legitimate refugees, saying: "We do not offer them a better health-care plan than the ordinary Canadian can receive."

"I think that's something that both new and existing and old-stock Canadians can agree with."

I haven't heard the term "old stock" refer to people.

Conventional wisdom would figure that a Canadian citizen is a Canadian, regardless of status. Plus, you're not supposed to end a sentence with a preposition.

I recall Old Stock is a beer from Calgary, and that there are sales to get rid of old stock but not old stock people. When did people become "stock"?

As a student I worked in a gas station/grocery store. We were told to rotate the stock and place the older items on top so we could get rid of them. Is this how we get rid of the old stock in Canada?

Harper defines old stock as people who are the children of immigrants and were born here. In other words, people who are born with Canadian citizenship. Does this mean that people who have gained Canadian citizenship during their lives are not the same as old stock Canadians?

This raises an interesting point. In 1960, Parliament amended the citizenship act to grant Canadian citizenship to "Indian People." This included the right to vote in federal elections. Since we only got Canadian citizenship in 1960, what were we before?

Since I was born before 1960, I and all those born before that date technically received our citizenship during our lifetimes and are therefore not old stock Canadians. Even though my ancestors made treaty with the Crown and agreed to share this land with the newcomers, I am not an old stock Canadian according to Harper's definition. Maybe this explains why First Nations have substandard services.

One theory making the rounds is that the mention of old stock is a balloon floated by Harper's new consultant, Lynton Crosby to send a message to the Tory base that they are old stock Canadians, and therefore special and a cut above.

Crosby has a reputation as a political pit bull who has no qualms about wedge politics and slinging mud. Racism makes good politics with a part of the Tory base, and right now the party needs every trick in the book if it expects to win the election.

But a look at Canadian history reveals a checkered past. The country was settled by the French and English, and Quebec accepted Catholics such as the Irish. Ontario and the Maritimes, which had strong organizations of Orangemen., welcomed Protestant settlers.

The government used the threat of the West being overtaken by French Catholics to recruit militia to fight Louis Riel in 1885. As far as the government was concerned, First Nations were a vanishing race and would either be gone or assimilated in a few years. This was the role of the boarding schools.

Chinese men were brought in to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. They earned a dollar a day and were given the most dangerous jobs of handling explosives and working in the tunnels. It is estimated that each mile of track in the mountains cost four Chinese lives.

The government hoped that the Chinese would be the first temporary foreign workers but instead they wanted to stay and bring in their families. Canada offered opportunities not available to the poverty stricken labourers back in China. In 1885, the federal government imposed a head tax of \$50 for every Chinese immigrant to Canada, and raised it to \$500 in 1903.

This reduced Chinese immigration to a trickle. It was their reward for building a railroad that fulfilled the Canadian Dream of a nation from sea to sea.

In 1914, the Japanese ship, Komagata Maru, arrived in Vancouver harbour with 375 migrants from India seeking to make a new life in Canada. The Canadian government refused them entry and after a two-month standoff the ship was escorted out of the harbour by a Canadian gunboat.

Old stock Canadians wanted a white homogeneous Canada. Thankfully, it's not the nation that was built by better people.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/first+nations+stock+definition/11389621/story.html>

Minister hopes new approach aids aboriginal relations

By Alex Mccuaig on September 26, 2015.



Medicine Hat MLA Bob Wanner and Justice Minister, Solicitor General Kathleen Ganley (centre) are taken on a tour of the Saamis Teepee by Jeanette Hansen, executive director at the Miywasin Centre, on Friday morning.--NEWS PHOTO EMMA BENNETT

Alberta's solicitor general took a tour of the Hat Friday, meeting with local law as well as First Nations and Métis officials in her dual role as minister of Aboriginal Relations.

Justice Minister Kathleen Ganley said the province is looking at taking a different approach to aboriginal issues than previous governments.

"We intend to employ a very different approach," said Ganley outside the Miywasin Centre Friday following a luncheon with local elders.

"Historically, the relationship has been a little rocky and that's been through a certain amount of failure to listen. Our intention is to do a much better job of that."

Ganley stated the NDP government is going department by department to align policies that take into account the U.N.'s declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, which Canada announced its support of in 2012.

As for the possibility of the government reviving the short-lived provincial Interim Métis Harvesting Agreement, which Alberta withdrew from in 2007, Ganley said, "it's a matter of balancing all the rights and interests.

"Certainly going forward, we'll be discussing that but we haven't gotten into a particularly fulsome discussion yet."

Funding for Alberta Legal Aid said current funding will be at least maintained.

“Right now, we’ve got to where we are covering people on AISH (Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped), which is, I don’t think, an adequate place to be,” said Ganley.

Though, she added, no final decisions have been made regarding future funding models for legal aid in the province.

Medicine Hat MLA Speaker Bob Wanner said he is pleased to host the minister and, “to create an opportunity for local folks to create a relationship with ministers.”

Finance Minister Joe Ceci will be visiting the city on Monday and meeting with the Medicine Hat Chamber of Commerce members.

Direct Link: <http://medicinehatnews.com/news/local-news/2015/09/26/minister-hopes-new-approach-aids-aboriginal-relations/>

Opportunities await MKO’s new chief

By [Joseph Quesnel](#)

First posted: Saturday, September 26, 2015 10:30 AM CDT | Updated: Saturday, September 26, 2015 12:39 PM CDT



Sheila North Wilson is the new grand chief of MKO. (TWITTER PHOTO)

The election of a new grand chief of the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) is a perfect opportunity to pursue a new agenda to improve the lives of Northern Manitoba First Nations.

The MKO represents Manitoba’s 30 northern First Nations and in early September, a new chief, Sheila North Wilson, was elected to lead the organization. This serves as an opportunity to bring real change and prosperity for northern Manitoba bands.

During her campaign, North Wilson emphasized the importance of ensuring First Nations families stay together. It is said Manitoba has one of the highest apprehension rates, so this area does deserve immediate attention. However, the state of First Nations' education in Manitoba also deserves attention. A 2014 internal report by Aboriginal Affairs noted that, at 28%, Manitoba has the lowest high school graduation rate for First Nations in the country.

A 2014 study by the Fraser Institute found the on-reserve education system is failing indigenous students.

The study demonstrated increased funding has not improved graduation rates, which remain under 40% nationally. Unlike in our provincial education systems, there are no minimum legislated education standards, no requirement for a core curriculum meeting provincial standards, and no requirement for First Nations schools to award a recognized provincial diploma for on-reserve students.

The MKO has the opportunity to work towards addressing graduation rates in Manitoba by working with First Nations leaders across the province. The MKO's work should include working with industries close to Northern Manitoba First Nations.

Natural resource exploration and development could be a main driver of economic improvement for many indigenous communities. Mining is Manitoba's second largest resource industry and is of great benefit to northern First Nations.

The Fraser Institute Annual Mining Survey measures the policy environment for mining all over the world and placed Manitoba in the top 10 for 2014. However, many of the comments on Manitoba expressed concern about aboriginal issues.

The new MKO chief has an opportunity to bring Northern First Nations and government together to strengthen consultation policies so that First Nations and the province benefit from mining investment.

Lastly, MKO should promote good governance among its communities.

Good governance is connected to improved socio-economic outcomes; in fact a 2013 Fraser Institute report demonstrated better governance can lead to a higher standard of living on reserves. The new grand chief has the opportunity to promote transparent and accountable governance structures that can result in a higher standard of living for all Northern Manitoba First Nation residents.

More First Nation communities should also attempt to get out from under the Indian Act, through regimes such as the First Nations Land Management Act (FNLMA) regime. The FNLMA allows bands to control their own lands and resources and has been proven to improve socio-economic outcomes on First Nations. At present, only one of the 94 bands with an operational land code is from northern Manitoba.

Time will tell if MKO will work to expand opportunities for Northern First Nations in Manitoba that can result in higher graduation rates, accountable and transparent governments and economic prosperity for its members.

— Quesnel is a senior fellow with the Fraser Institute.

Direct Link: <http://www.winnipegsun.com/2015/09/26/opportunities-await-mkos-new-chief>

Métis citizens discuss state of provincial organization at general meeting

Political, financial situation of Métis Nation-Saskatchewan in limbo

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 26, 2015 6:51 PM CT Last Updated: Sep 26, 2015 6:51 PM CT



Over 60 people were in attendance at the general assembly that took place at the CUMFI building in Saskatoon. (Victoria Dinh/CBC)

Members of the Métis community met at the Central Urban Métis Federation Wellness Centre Saturday for a general assembly to discuss the state of their provincial organization, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S).

"We're assembled here today to try and move our nation forward at the grassroots level," said president of Green Lake Métis local, Kelvin Roy.

Over 60 people came to discuss the political and financial situation of the organization in hopes of a legislative assembly.

"We're recommending resolutions to the [Métis Nation Legislative Assembly], where they should decide the outcomes of those resolutions under their authority," said Roy.

In a statement titled Resolution to call an MNLA, the resolved outcome states the Métis citizens of Saskatchewan are calling for an MNLA to be held on Nov. 13-14. The legislative assembly would be made of 33 delegates consisting of 75 per cent of active locals, four youth and four women representatives with acquired funding from the federal government.

Legislative assembly ordered

Back in April, a Queen's Bench judge ordered the MN-S to hold a legislative assembly on or before June 19.

Any funding coming into the MN-S was helped by Aboriginal Affairs until an assembly, made up of Métis delegates from across the province, took place.



"All we're asking for is our right to exercise our democratic right to decide and recommend an outcome for our nation," said Kelvin Roy. (Victoria Dinh/CBC)

"Under our constitution, we have the right to assemble and we're just here to exercise that right, to recommend to our MNLA the direction that we want our MNLA members to take," Roy said.

"All we're asking for is our right to exercise our democratic right to decide and recommend an outcome for our nation," he added.

MN-S president Robert Doucette was among the crowd. He said, "The bottom line for me, with respect to the MN-S, is to see an MNLA happen. Where the voices of our people are heard, and they give direction, and we deal with it," he said. "That's the end goal for, I think, a lot of people across this province."

Doucette said that in 2012, the group had an operating budget of almost \$4 million. Now, the funds are nearly gone, leaving him to wonder what happened in the past three years.

"I think the goals of all these people here is to get this organization back on good footing and in the right direction," he said.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/m%C3%A9tis-citizens-discuss-state-of-provincial-organization-at-general-meeting-1.3245553>

Race for FSIN chief begins today

By Jason Warick, The Starphoenix September 28, 2015



Current interim FSIN chief Kimberly Jonathan will not be running for the chief 's position. In an interview, she said she'll seek the position of first vice-chief.

The race to lead the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) officially begins today, with the eventual winner tasked with leading the charge on social housing, education funding, resource revenue sharing and a host of other issues.

The new chief will also face the task of uniting the often fractious and cashstrapped federation. Delegates gather in Saskatoon October 28 and 29 at TCU Place for the vote.

Nominations officially close today at noon. Current interim FSIN chief Kimberly Jonathan will not be running for the chief 's position. In an interview, she said she'll seek the position of first vice-chief.

But two other high-profile contenders have already made their intentions known. Former Meadow Lake Tribal Council head and FSIN chief of staff Helen Ben launched her campaign Sept. 18.

"With the Supreme Court of Canada ruling in our favour time and time again, upholding our Inherent and Treaty Rights, it is time we challenge ourselves, our communities and our partnerships to rise to the challenge of believing in our creator given rights of self determination and unifying once again with One Voice!" Ben said in a statement.

Current two-term FSIN vice-chief Bobby Cameron is also running.

Cameron said candidates will likely spend the next month driving and flying to as many of the FSIN's 70-plus First Nations.

"It's a big province to cover. You have to put in the time," Cameron said.

Cameron said the inequality in education funding for First Nations schools, the lack of social housing and the need for a resource revenue sharing deal will be critical issues for First Nations during the next few years. He noted some communities, such as those comprising the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, have housing wait lists of more than 500 families.

"That is severe. We all want better communities," he said.

Cameron agreed there are differing opinions on the importance of the FSIN. Some believe the treaty boundaries are more logical ways to form alliances, while others say the province's tribal councils can handle most of the work the FSIN has traditionally done. Still others say each First Nation is sovereign, and don't need the FSIN.

Ben and Cameron believe the FSIN is needed more now than ever.

"The FSIN still has relevance," Cameron said. "It's a collective voice, a unified approach. We are one of the strongest organizations in Canada."

Former FSIN chief Guy Lonechild has said he's also considering entering the race. He said he's humbled by the support of those encouraging him to run, and will make an official announcement today.

Another chief rumoured to be running declined to comment, saying he'll make his intentions known today as well.

The FSIN has lost most of its federal government funding in recent years, and has far fewer staff as a result. Chiefs are split on whether to pour energy into lobbying for more federal funds, using casino profits which currently fund recreation and other programs in various communities, or going into the future with a more limited capacity.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/race+fsin+chief+begins+today/11396211/story.html>

Metis Nation hopes for interim funding

Assets in jeopardy without deal

By Jason Warick, The Starphoenix September 28, 2015



The federal government could come up with enough funding to pay the rent on the headquarters of the embattled Metis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S), says President Robert Doucette.

The federal government could come up with enough funding to pay the rent on the headquarters of the embattled Metis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S), says President Robert Doucette.

If that funding doesn't come, the future of more than \$2 million worth of computer servers, artifacts and an invaluable registry listing tens of thousands of Metis citizens could be in jeopardy, Doucette said.

Other levels of government cut off hundreds of thousands in funding because the various warring factions have failed to call a legislative assembly for the past five years.

The seemingly intractable disputes are far from over, if a Saskatoon meeting was any indication. But Doucette said the federal government is open to at least keeping the

lights on at their Jessop Avenue building. He and vicepresident Gerald Morin, who have been at odds for several years, met together with federal officials last week, he said.

"I think you're going to see some movement there. That's in the works right now," Doucette said.

Doucette said it would be a tremendous task to vacate the building and find a home for all of the computer equipment, registry records and other items.

If anyone feels the political problems are preventing funding for their essential programs, Doucette said he and other elected leaders could move out of the building until things are resolved. Doucette was on hand as an observer during an event billed as a "grassroots" meeting of Metis people. The Saturday event had been wellpublicized, but less than 70 people were in attendance.

Many of them were local presidents or held other positions in the organization. In his opening remarks, meeting chair Jeff Joanet said he's become frustrated by the lack of co-operation by leaders.

"I am concerned about the Metis people of Saskatchewan. I am concerned about all of us," he said.

Joanet encouraged everyone to give input in a respectful way.

Within minutes, however, the meeting had descended into finger-pointing and profanity. A woman who had brought her young son took him out of the room as one man ignored Joanet and yelled accusations at individuals in the crowd.

The first order of business was to adopt a general statement of principles or manifesto. That required nearly an hour of procedural wrangling over quorum, constitutionality and other arguments. The manifesto was eventually adopted.

A later motion to suspend everyone in the Morin "faction" was withdrawn after lengthy criticism that it would exacerbate the deep divisions.

Doucette said the weekend meeting won't solve all MN-S problems, but at least people are showing they care about the future of the organization.

"This meeting is moving us closer to what we want," Doucette said. "I'm very optimistic."

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/metis+nation+hopes+interim+funding/11396212/story.html>

Upcoming Ottawa Inuit feast to feature pre-election pitch

Tungasuvvingat Inuit inviting Vanier candidates to encourage Inuit voting

LISA GREGOIRE, September 28, 2015 - 4:00 pm



Christine Lund, right, a program co-ordinator with Tungasuvvingat Inuit in Ottawa, serves up seal stew during a country food luncheon in 2013. The Oct. 15 lunch at Assumption Church on Cody Avenue in Vanier will feature an information session from Elections Canada. Organizers are also inviting candidates from the four major parties to address Inuit participants. (FILE PHOTO)

OTTAWA — When Oct. 19 comes around, there might be a buzz in some Nunavut communities — at the office, at the co-op, at the school — because it's voting day for the federal election.

But in urban centres, that same community buzz might not exist. So staff at Tungasuvvingat Inuit in Ottawa are hoping to answer some questions and make it easier for Inuit to mark their ballot in three week's time.

Tungasuvvingat Inuit, which runs many community programs for urban Inuit in the nation's capital, holds [a community feast](#) in Vanier on the third Thursday of every month and the October installment just happens to be right before the election.

Organizers have invited Elections Canada officials to make a presentation at the Oct. 15 feast held in the basement of Our Lady of Assumption church, off Cody Avenue in Vanier, an area of town which is home to, and frequented by, many members of Ottawa's Inuit community.

Organizers also plan to invite Ottawa-Vanier riding candidates from the four major parties: Liberal incumbent Mauril Bélanger, Nira Dookeran of the Green Party, Conservative candidate David Piccini and Emilie Taman with the NDP.

Elections Canada will make their presentation first, at noon, then, any candidates who attend will be invited to make an appeal to Inuit voters from 12:30 to 1:30, when the feast concludes.

The feast is one of TI's most popular community events, regularly attracting 80 to 130 people each month.

Staff and volunteers try to offer as much country foods as they can round up — usually a meat stew such as caribou or seal, and, if possible, Arctic char and maktaaq.

They also serve southern foods such as vegetables and dip, cheese and crackers, desserts, juice, coffee and tea. The feast is free to anyone who shows up.

The Vanier riding comprises a huge egg-shaped swath of northeast Ottawa bisected by Montreal Road. It runs from Colonel By Drive in the East to Greens Creek in the West and from the Ottawa River in the North to the Queensway. It also includes a little neighbourhood south of the highway called Pineview.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674upcoming_ottawa_inuit_feast_to_feat_ure_pre-election_info/

Nunavut's federal candidates: Leona Aglukkaq

“No other government in the history of Canada has made the North such a priority”

LISA GREGOIRE, September 28, 2015 - 8:00 am



Conservative MP Leona Aglukkaq on the campaign trail with Baker Lake supporter Peter Tapatai. (PHOTO COURTESY LEONA AGLUKKAQ)

To help inform our readers, *Nunatsiaq News* posed seven questions to candidates from the three major political parties contesting the Nunavut seat in the Oct. 19 federal election — Canada's biggest riding and the only one that spans three time zones. We will run them in alphabetical order.

Here's the first of three candidate profiles: Leona Aglukkaq of the Conservative Party of Canada.

Aglukkaq, the incumbent MP, told *Nunatsiaq News* she's running on her record. She said no other party has done more in terms of investing in Nunavut and she pointed to the

recent legal settlement with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. on implementation of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement as an example of her government's commitment. Although her party is fighting to maintain ground in the polls, Aglukkaq said her constituents tend to vote for the person, not the party, and she's confident they have faith in her leadership.

1. What makes you believe you're qualified to serve as Nunavut's MP?

I'm running on my record for the last seven years of producing results for Nunavummiut. Since being elected in 2008, I have been working to ensure the needs of Nunavut were heard in Ottawa. I have worked to ensure the Prime Minister as well as my cabinet colleagues understood the realities of Nunavut and the unique challenges we face.

No other government in the history of Canada has made the North such a priority. This election is about leadership and I have been able to deliver to Nunavummiut and address some of the challenges we've been facing for some time.

2. How much would you spend on badly-needed infrastructure in Nunavut and what sort of projects do you support?

Our government is providing the Government of Nunavut with a record level of funding for important programs such as health and education and we have made many strategic investments related to training in the mining industry, fishing industry, arts and crafts.

We've also put in place long-term stable funding for infrastructure by putting in place the Building Canada Fund of \$419 million over 10 years.

From 1995 to 2006, the territorial government infrastructure budget was \$55 million. Now it's \$419 million going forward to address the infrastructure gap. We've also established a P3 program that includes Inuit organizations. This was a direct result of consultation with Inuit leaders.

I'm sitting in my hotel room and looking at the new construction of the Taloyoak Health Centre. And I look down the street, it's a brand new hamlet office building that our government has made investments in.

3. Do you support oil and gas development in the Arctic?

I've always been very clear around oil and gas development. Responsible resource development in the North, that's what we say and that's what our entire land claim agreement is about.

No project will go forward if it does not meet the standards. Decisions approving any project have to go through the rigorous environmental assessment boards which, for off-shore, is the National Energy Board.

No political party or individual make these decisions. The [NEB] or the Nunavut Impact Review Board does the evaluation of any project. And they do a fantastic job.

If a project does not meet the bar of moving forward, then it shouldn't move forward. The onus is on the sector to make sure their projects are environmentally sound.

4. What would you and your party do to address the housing crisis in Nunavut?

Every community's needs are different, but we are addressing some of those infrastructure gaps. Social housing is another one that we have put a lot of money into in the North. This is an ongoing area that needs attention.

The federal government, since we formed government, I believe, has spent about \$600 million just in social housing, affordable housing and homelessness partnership programs with the territorial government.

If I am re-elected, I will continue to advocate for social housing for Nunavut. And in fact, in this federal budget, there's a \$2.3 billion social housing budget which has yet to be allocated by region so we continue to advocate for more housing.

I appreciate that the Government of Nunavut and the former housing minister had issues delivering more housing to Nunavut, but our government has remained committed in supporting the territorial government.

5. How would you and your party address poverty and job creation in Nunavut?

We have made strategic investments in training Nunavummiut. We created the first ever northern adult basic education program where about \$22 million was allocated to train Nunavummiut in skills training in sectors like mining, for example.

To date, over 2,000 northerners have participated in that program. We've made strategic investments in the mining sector in partnership with the Kivalliq Mine Training Society, Kitikmeot Inuit Association, in partnership with both KIAs.

We've made strategic investment related to the mining sector so that Kivallirmiut, for instance, can participate in job opportunities with Agnico Eagle and over 200 people are participating in the workforce in that region, for example.

We've also made strategic investments in the emerging sector based on our decision to increase the turbot allocation off the coast of Baffin Island. Our government delivered on a request after many years of being asked. We've seen over 1,000 people participate in the training program so that Inuit can participate in the \$70 to \$80 million industry that we helped build in our communities.

Our government has also supported the Nunavut Sivuniksavut board of directors in purchasing a bigger facility in Ottawa so that they can take in more Nunavut students into the NS program. [Aglukkaq's staff later said her government gave NS \$2.5 million.]

6. How would you and your party address overwhelming addiction and mental health problems in Nunavut?

We all know that mental health is a very serious issue and that no one government or organization can tackle it alone. In Nunavut, unfortunately, everyone knows someone who has been affected by mental health or suicide.

I had recently announced with the minister of health from Nunavut, funding of more than \$32 million over the next three years to access services in Nunavut, which also includes a mental health component.

We've also invested in projects to keep our youth active and away from abusing drugs or alcohol. This was done through the national anti-drug strategy.

During my time as chair of the Arctic Council, I had also championed the issue of making mental health a priority in the Arctic region.

7. What are the most important issues facing northern youth and how do you plan to address them?

I visit the schools and I talk to our young people to stay in school. It's important to take the opportunities before you. In my view, it's so important to get a good education.

We have to take a balanced approach to make sure that with education, that we also look at what opportunities are out there for jobs, to make sure our young people have the training and skills they need to participate in the work economy.

It's also very important to support our young people staying connected to their culture and to their language. Our roots are who we are as people so the programs we put forward support the hunting, Junior Rangers learning land skills, as an example, as well as providing support to our artists.

Candidate responses have been edited to fit the available space. Tomorrow we feature NDP hopeful Jack Anawak.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavuts_federal_candidates_leona_aglukkaq/

Yukon First Nations urge citizens to vote in federal election

Yukon First Nations are making sure their citizens are registered and ready to vote

By Nancy Thomson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 29, 2015 9:14 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 29, 2015 11:30 AM CT



A still from music video produced to encourage Indigenous Peoples to vote, by the group Young Medicine. CBC North's Nancy Thomson says that the push to galvanize the Indigenous vote may be felt in Yukon as much as anywhere else in Canada. (Youtube)

As the 2015 election enters the final stretch, the parties are fighting tooth and nail for every last vote.

One segment of the population that has [not historically been well-represented at the polls is that of aboriginal Canadians](#).

Some studies say fewer aboriginal people vote because lower educational and socio-economic levels lead to less engagement. Others say First Nations don't care about participating in an electoral process that's foreign to aboriginal culture. Still others believe that aboriginal voters feel excluded in general, and don't trust the Canadian political system.

This election may be a game-changer.

The First Nations vote has been the subject of vigorous debate at the national level this year: [the Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Perry Bellegarde said](#), "it is vital that First Nations voices be heard in every way possible, including through the ballot box. You need to be an example. You need to vote."

That sentiment is reflected in the Yukon.

Recent federal amendments to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment Act have provoked outrage from First Nations, [with three preparing to sue Canada over the changes enacted through Bill S-6](#).

"We're not just sitting idly by, ignoring these issues," said Doris Bill, chief of Kwanlin Dün, Yukon's most populous First Nation. "I think if anything, things like S-6 have motivated people to vote. I think people will come to the polls to make it count."

"I think it's critically important. For myself, I'm going to be doing everything within our community to see that people get out and vote," Bill said.



'I think it's critically important,' said Kwanlin Dün Chief Doris Bill, who says she's 'going to be doing everything within our community to see that people get out and vote.' (Philippe Morin/CBC)

Kwanlin Dün and several other First Nations have hired coordinators to ensure that all citizens are able to vote.

Last year, the federal government amended the Elections Act, adding stricter voter ID requirements, and specifying that voters must be able to prove their name and home address.

That can be a problem for First Nations people living in small rural communities, which often do not use street addresses.

The AFN has designed a "Letter of Confirmation of Residence" that aboriginal voters can use when they go to vote. It functions as a form of ID, proving a home address. It can be signed by a band administrator and, when presented with a second piece of ID, such as a status card, will be accepted by Elections Canada.

First Nations vote could tip balance in Yukon

"We as a First Nation have decided that as many people as want to vote, will be eligible to vote," Mathieya Alatini, chief of the Kluane First Nation, said. "We've hired somebody to go door-to-door, and sit down with people and go through the requirements for identification, make sure that they're on the voters list."

Alatini agrees that First Nations voters are galvanized in a way she's never seen before.



Chief Mathieya Alatini leads Yukon's Kluane First Nation. (Philippe Morin/CBC)

"We live in Canada. We have a federal election. That is the government that has the say on how all of our tax dollars get spent. So if you want your say in changing who that government is or putting that government in place, then you need to act responsibly and exercise your vote."

The Champagne and Aishihik First Nation, the Teslin Tlingit Council, and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation are doing the same.

This "get out the vote" movement among First Nations, if successful, could tip the balance in the Yukon, which is considered to be a swing riding in a tightly contested battle between the three main parties.

Bill says it's time for First Nations voters to make their mark.

"I think there's enough aboriginal people within the territory, and according to the AFN research that they did, there are enough aboriginal people within the territory to influence the outcome."

'The catalyst is things like Bill S-6'

Dana Tizya-Tramm, a 28-year-old member of the Vuntut Gwitchin, sees the emergence of a far more sophisticated approach to voting from First Nations.

"I think what we're seeing is a type of maturity in the way we react with politics," Tizya-Tramm said. "Because we've been somewhat left out of them for quite a while, we've only recently got the vote, within the past 50 years."

"I think you're starting to see our governments and our culture starting to pay attention a lot more to this machine and to work it to our benefit."

Tizya-Tramm says First Nations people have felt paternalistic attitudes from politicians of all stripes in the past. He says that's changing.

"I think we're really becoming empowered now and the catalyst is things like Bill S-6," he said. "We're worried about this future, we're worried about our lands... so we want to have a hand shaping our future."

Some chiefs in southern Canada have exhorted their citizens to boycott the federal election, saying it's not how First Nations traditionally governed.

Tizya-Tramm says that's a clumsy and shortsighted strategy.

"If people want change, we have to make it. We need participation. We have an opportunity to shape it," he says. "It's malleable, it's not made of steel, we have to be inspired and we have to participate."

"We have to make this government a reflection of us, not the other way around."

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-first-nations-urge-citizens-to-vote-in-federal-election-1.3247884>

'Our issues matter' – national chief

By [JENNIFER HAMILTON-MCCHARLES](#), The Nugget

Monday, September 28, 2015 10:49:26 EDT PM



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde is urging all First Nations people to vote Oct.19.

“You need to get out and vote. Our vote matters, our issues matter. Find out which political party is willing to close the gap,” he told about 75 in attendance during a lecture at Nipissing University, Monday evening.

“Oct. 19 is so important. Just to be clear, yes I will be voting and I will try my best to work with everyone. Our people, our voice and our vote will matter. This is an important election and every vote will matter.”

Bellegarde didn't always feel this way.

The national chief announced in September that he would not vote in the federal election because he wanted to remain non-partisan.

He has since changed his mind and is now encouraging all First Nations people to exercise the right.

Bellegarde is using the federal election as an opportunity to bring First Nations' issues to the forefront.

He said he sent his recently released eight-page document titled Closing the Gap: 2015 Federal Election Priorities for First Nations and Canada to the leaders of the four main parties. Responses have been promised.

The document highlights the many inequalities First Nations people experience.

Bellegarde said Canada is ranked sixth on the United Nations Human Development Index which measures such things as quality of life, literacy, education and life expectancy. First Nations in Canada, meanwhile ranked 63rd.

The federal government's Community Well-Being Index shows the gap has not closed since 1981, he said.

“Our life expectancy is five to seven years less, our infant mortality rate is one-and-a-half times the national average, half of our children live in poverty, 40,000 are in foster care, 132 First Nations communities are under a boil (water) advisory and 25 per cent of jails are filled with First Nations people,” Bellegarde said.

“The gap needs to be closed. It's been 35 years since this gap has been addressed and it's not in the best interests of our country (to keep it that way). There is a high social cost to this gap.”

Bellegarde said he hasn't heard much election dialogue about First Nations issues or what the leaders of the four main parties plan to do to close the gap.

He suggested increasing funding to on-reserve schools is a good place to start.

Bellegarde said schools on reserves receive \$6,000 per student compared to \$11,000 per student for students who attend English public schools and \$20,000 per student for students who attend French schools off reserve.

Bellegarde's six-point plan includes strengthening First Nations communities, equitable funding for essential services, upholding treaty rights, respecting the environment, revitalizing indigenous languages and ensuring that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 recommendations come to fruition.

“English and French are very important, but the public shouldn't forget about indigenous languages. These languages should be looked at as Canadian jewels or national treasures,” Bellegarde said.

He thanked Green Party candidate Nicole Peltier, NDP candidate Kathleen Jodouin and Liberal candidate Anthony Rota for attending his lecture.

Direct Link: <http://www.nugget.ca/2015/09/28/our-issues-matter--national-chief>

Sask Métis. hopeful Métis Nation Saskatchewan can get back on track

By [Kelly Malone](#)

September 28, 2015 - 12:04pm



The Métis and Treaty Six Territory flag flying at Saskatoon City Hall. Trelle Burdeniuk/News Talk Radio

At a meeting filled with discussions about the future and outbursts surrounding internal politics, members of Saskatchewan's Métis community tried to find a way to keep the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan (MN-S) alive.

The Métis Nation General Assembly (MNGA) held on Saturday afternoon at the Central Urban Métis Federation (CUMFI) building in Saskatoon saw around 70 people gather to discuss the organization's future.

"It's pathetic really. The president and the Provincial Métis Council (PMC), they are in steady court cases and that," local president Guy Tourand said.

"They have to come to a common understanding and deal with the people. They made it personal is what happened."

Local leadership called for all Métis citizens to come out to the general assembly where they passed two resolutions including a manifesto which gives the MNGA authority to meet and make resolutions moving the MN-S forward and a resolution to hold an MNLA on December 11 and 12 and a MNGA on December 13. The motion to schedule the MNLA was unanimous.

There is a long history of political infighting at MN-S which resulted in the PMC not holding any meetings, which are required to set a date for MNLAs, and therefore no date was set for a legislative assembly since 2010.

[In October 2014 the federal government halted funding to the group because of its failure to hold up to its financial agreement](#) which requires two assemblies a year. Without the \$416,000 annual federal operating grant, MN-S let its employees go and locked the doors this past March.

At the start of September, a Queen's bench justice ruled that MN-S Vice President Gerald Morin and the PMC were not in contempt of court when they failed to hold a meeting to set an MNLA.

"We are hoping to get and MNLA but my feelings are if we don't get an MNLA then the people should call a special meeting and vote the PMC out or take a more drastic measure and just dissolve the MN-S because we've got nothing right now so what are you going to lose," Tourond said.

"Dissolve the corporation and start a new one from scratch and get rid of these people who are causing all of the problems."

Brian Reynold-Potras said because of the two warring factions the MN-S is in "complete shambles".

"They have ground the day-to-day operations of the MN-S to a complete halt and it's affected everything, day-to-day stuff like housing, citizenship, and every other thing that the MN-S provides to it's citizens," Reynold-Potras said.

"I'm concerned because every other province in Canada has a fully functional Métis system... every province except Saskatchewan. We do not have a voice now, it's been hushed."

[Local president for Green Lake Kelvin Roy was involved in calling the weekend's general assembly. He said they are hopeful that there will be funding allocated to allow the MNLA to go ahead in December.](#)

"We are making an application to both the federal and provincial authorities to release a portion of the hold back funds that are available, to a third party to manage these funds to ensure that the process moves along with the end result of having an MNLA and general assembly," he said.

"People are very frustrated and upset and mad and outraged over what's going on with their nation and they want action. It's understandable to see such outrage at such a meeting."

MN-S SASKATOON OFFICE FUTURE STILL UNCERTAIN

Last week, MN-S President Robert Doucette met with vice president Gerald Morin and federal representatives to find funds before the organization is forced to move out of their MN-S office in Saskatoon.

Doucette and Morin have been at odds for years but Doucette said he is optimistic about the talks.

"I can't say we came up with any concrete plans in respect to the building but I think when federal officials did the tour of our building and they actually saw what was at stake, I think you are going to see some movement there," Doucette said.

The building on Jessop Avenue holds more than \$2 million worth of assets including servers, registry files for the province's Métis citizens, confidential information, and artifacts. Doucette said they've only paid rent until the end of September but it would be extremely costly to have to move the organization out.

"I can't speak for (the federal representatives), but I'm hopeful they will see at the very least they will pay some rent and we will come to some conclusion," Doucette said.

Doucette added that if there is a concern around the political infighting, the politicians could move out of the building.

"Rehire the people for the registry, that's a stand alone registry, and there's no politics there. Then we deal with (political) stuff outside that building," he said. "But at least let our people register."

- With files from News Talk Radio's Lasia Kretzel

Direct Link: <http://ckom.com/article/223616/sask-m-tis-hopeful-m-tis-nation-saskatchewan-can-get-back-track>

Liberal candidate touts housing, relations with Aboriginal groups

“We really need is to work with these communities to understand their objectives”

SARAH ROGERS, September 28, 2015 - 9:00 am



Pierre Dufour, a licensed travel agent, spent the last four years heading the centre for local development in Val d'Or. (PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LPC)

This week, *Nunatsiaq News* is running profiles of major party candidates running in the upcoming federal election, including four who are vying for the Abitibi-James Bay-Nunavik-Eeyou seat. We will run them in alphabetical order.

First up is Pierre Dufour, the Liberal candidate, who says his party will bring much-needed infrastructure and housing to Quebec's northernmost regions, if they form a government after Oct. 19.

As part of the party's campaign, the Liberals have announced investments of \$20 billion over 10 years towards social infrastructure.

That includes \$125 million in tax incentives each year to build and renovate what the party calls “affordable” housing for low-income Canadians over the next five years.

It's a plan Dufour says will directly benefit Nunavimmiut and other communities in the riding who rely largely on social housing.

“[Overcrowding] and a lack of housing is a real problem,” Dufour said in a September interview with *Nunatsiaq News*.

“And it's not just the role of the province or private industry, it's also the role of the federal government.”

As many politicians do, Dufour waited until his children, aged 18 and 20, were fully grown before deciding to run for public office.

A licensed travel agent who owns a travel agency with family, Dufour spent the last seven years as director general for the local development centre (Centre local de développement) in Val d'Or,) which supports economic development and local entrepreneurs.

It's from that viewpoint that Dufour says he's gathered a clear picture of the unique needs and challenges faced by communities in Quebec's northernmost riding.

Resource development — namely mining — have been the major industry to move into the region in recent years.

The private sector plays an important role in bringing infrastructure to northern and remote communities, Dufour said, and he supports that development, so long as communities play a role.

“We have to work with collaboration with these communities,” he said. “When these projects are done in harmony with the community and the project leader, it can be a very good thing.”

The end goal, he says, should be to bring prosperity to communities, like those in Nunavik, which offer few jobs.

Dufour says it's also his intention, if elected as MP, to respond to the issues raised by the [Nutrition North Canada subsidy program](#) and ensure the riding's most remote communities have access to affordable food.

“It's not a bad program at its base, but there haven't been rules in place to ensure the retailer doing its job,” he said.

Although the current government has made some tweaks to the program this year, Dufour said he would make it a priority to address outstanding problems.

“What's important is that Aboriginal communities have access to the things they need to live well,” Dufour said. “Food is a critical example.”

The Liberal platform includes a number of measures to support Canada's Indigenous communities, including what it calls a “nation-to-nation process” on how to address and prioritize issues flagged by First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.

The party has pledged to implement recommendations that came from the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report](#).

“We really need to work with these communities to understand what their objectives are,” Dufour said. “It shouldn’t be decided by a bunch of white people.

“What Aboriginal groups are trying to do is to stop [governments] from taking those decisions themselves,” he added. “There’s a will right now to work on this.”

Although Dufour has never visited Nunavik, he said his work with the local economic development centre has made him familiar with communities across the riding, and their developmental needs and challenges.

“It allowed me to discover the region,” he said. “But I’ll be ready to listen, ready to help.”

As part of revisions to the federal ridings in Canada, Abitibi-James Bay-Nunavik-Eeyou took on three new communities in its southwest corner, adding about 800 new voters.

The riding was last represented by a Liberal from 1997 to 2004, when it was held by Guy St-Julien.

Tomorrow, we feature Luc Ferland of the Bloc Québécois.

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674liberal_candidate_touts_housing_relations_with_aboriginal_groups/

Arctic, Inuit issues arise in federal leaders’ debate

"One thing they keep saying about you up there Mr. Harper is you're big sled, no dogs"

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, September 29, 2015 - 2:25 pm



During a federal leaders’ debate on foreign policy Sept. 28, Liberal leader Justin Trudeau likened Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s Arctic policy to a "big sled [with] no dogs." (CPAC SCREEN GRAB)

The Inuit and Canada's North have "arrived," Prime Minister Stephen Harper told a federal leaders' debate Sept. 28 — in no small part thanks to his government's efforts in the Arctic.

If Inuit in Canada feel they've been largely left out of the election campaign so far, they wouldn't be wrong, but the Toronto-based Munk Debate on foreign policy changed that Monday evening, at least for a couple of hours.

The leaders' debate included the three front-runners; Conservative leader and Prime Minister Stephen Harper, New Democratic leader Tom Mulcair and Liberal leader Justin Trudeau, who essentially traded barbs over who has had the most authentic experience in Canada's North.

Harper called his annual trips to Nunavut a "precedent in Canadian history," noting that "this kind of attention was simply never paid to this part of the country before."

"I am particularly proud that we have a remarkable Inuit woman who sits in the cabinet of Canada," Harper said in the debate, referring to his environment minister, the incumbent Nunavut MP Leona Aglukkaq.

"That is a real step forward to this country, and a real sign that those people...that the Inuit and the North has really arrived in our country."

But Trudeau was quick to question the PM's commitment to Nunavut and other northern regions, suggesting the Conservative's Arctic policy has been all talk, and little action.

"One of things with talking with communities, and seeing how people are struggling through the winter with inadequate food security and challenges with infrastructure," Trudeau told the debate. "The one thing they keep saying about you up there Mr. Harper is you're big sled, no dogs."

It's not clear which region "up there" refers to, but the expression garnered laughter from the debate crowd and some buzz on social media.

"The challenge we have is to understand that to have sovereignty over the Arctic, we have to support the communities, the people who live there, who've have lived there for a millennium," Trudeau continued. "And that's what you're not doing enough of."

Mulcair used the debate to plug his own Sept. 29 campaign stop in Iqaluit, a trip the NDP leader flagged as a chance to visit "Harper's failures" in the North.

"In Canada's North, as we've seen in Kuujuaq recently ... there's a crisis around housing," Mulcair said. "I've seen houses with 18 inhabitants in one room. How can a child do their homework?"

“This is a social and economic crisis that is ravaging our future generations. This is the government’s obligation, it reflects our deep-seated Canadian values and I will deal with this as soon as I become prime minister of Canada,” he said.

“This is top priority, we need to address the housing issues for First Nations and Inuit peoples.”

Direct Link:

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674arctic_inuit_issues_make_federal_leaders_debate/

Vote 2015: How will you work with First Nations?

Sea-to-Sky federal candidates share their thoughts

[Jennifer Thuncher](#) / Squamish Chief

September 30, 2015 12:00 PM



In advance of the Oct. 19 federal election, The Squamish Chief is posing a series of questions on issues of importance to Squamish voters to the candidates for the West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country riding.

Q: How will you foster a productive relationship with First Nations in your riding while in office?

Ken Melamed, Green Party of Canada:

Of all other federal parties, the Green Party of Canada has made the strongest commitment to building a working relationship with First Nations based on trust. One of our big ideas is to convene a council of Canadian governments, which provides a seat at the table for First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders. Not only will we work to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and launch a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, but we’ll recognize indigenous

title and rights, negotiate in good faith to settle land claims, establish treaties and self-government arrangements, address the structural violence against indigenous communities, and move to repeal the Indian Act should that be the consensus of First Nations. We have also set aside dedicated funding to ensure quality public services for all First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

Pam Goldsmith-Jones, Liberal Party of Canada:

The Liberal Party of Canada is committed to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation report. Personally, this is in keeping with my long-standing, positive and productive relationship with the Squamish Nation chiefs and Council, and members of the Squamish Nation community. I have worked respectfully with Chief Leonard Andrew of Lil'wat Nation during the 2010 Winter Olympic games especially, and more recently I have become well acquainted with Chief Calvin Craigan from the Shishahl Nation as well as their community priorities going forward.

Improving relations within our diverse community is a key priority of mine throughout my political career thus far, and I plan on keeping it that way as your representative in Ottawa. As mayor of West Vancouver, I championed multiple joint initiatives with the Squamish Nation. Furthermore, I have themed my education and professional development around the promotion of First Nations issues. In June I earned an MBA in aboriginal business and leadership at Simon Fraser University.

Larry Koopman, New Democratic Party:

It's time for a new era that embraces a true Nation-to-Nation relationship, built on respect and, above all, makes meaningful progress when it comes to bringing about change.

An NDP government will create a cabinet-level committee chaired by Tom Mulcair as prime minister to ensure that all government decisions respect treaty rights, inherent rights and Canada's international obligations; call a national inquiry into the issue of the 1,200 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls within our first 100 days in office; fix our country's broken treaty process and deal with unresolved land claims; implement the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; reverse the dangerous damage done by Stephen Harper by putting teeth back into the environmental assessment process, working to protect our lakes and rivers and repealing Bill C-51; take action on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations on a priority basis established in consultation with Indigenous communities; improve essential physical infrastructure such as housing, roads and drinking water facilities; and stop underfunding First Nations schools.

John Weston, Conservative Party of Canada:

All aboriginal communities are important to our future and to Canada's economy. Consultation with all communities in our riding is very important to developing policy, processes and laws that ensure the sustainability of our quality of life. To be effective, there must be clarity in the consultative process. Consultation does not mean you consult after an initiative is announced, but prior as part of planning for the future. Nor is consultation a one-way effort or privilege that is limited to one group or sector. All communities have to feel a connection with their MP, and in this my record is strong. I have identified over 50 representatives across all communities in this riding, and have sought out to meet with them and keep a continued dialogue with each.

In regards to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), our government recognizes that there have been dark chapters in Canada's relationship with First Nations. I am proud that it was our government that not only initiated the TRC, but also asked that the commission be allowed to extend their mandate for an extra year.

- See more at: <http://www.squamishchief.com/news/local-news/vote-2015-how-will-you-work-with-first-nations-1.2073304#sthash.dcwjGx4.dpuf>

First Nations ID clinics helping people get properly registered

First Nation councillor holds identification clinics in response to what she calls the "Un-Fair Elections Act"

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 30, 2015 10:14 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 30, 2015 12:20 PM ET



The Fair Elections Act requires voters have two pieces of identification and eliminates vouching, a process that was frequently used in First Nations communities and lets a voter have someone swear to where he or she lives. (iStock)

The driving force behind a campaign to get First Nations people registered to vote says she's pleased with the response so far.

Dalles First Nation councillor Tania Cameron said more than half the 40 First Nations communities in the Kenora riding have approached her, to host a number of voter registration drives.

"I was able to attend one of them, and one of the elders there was asking, 'well, why? I don't remember having to do this before,' and we said 'because there's new laws that actually you have to go through this process.'"

Many people aren't happy with the Fair Elections Act, Cameron said. The act requires voters have two pieces of identification and eliminates vouching, a process that was frequently used in First Nations communities and lets a voter have someone swear to where he or she lives.

When speaking with people who "have gone in to see if they're registered and have done the work to get registered," Cameron said she asked, "'do you vote on a regular basis?'"

Many told her this was their first time voting, and that "this unfair elections act [is] making it harder for them to vote."

Elections Canada website issues

Cameron said one issue she's encountered is that some on-reserve residents are having trouble verifying their registration with the Elections Canada website.

The site requires a civic address — something she said many communities don't have.



Tania Cameron launched 'First Nations Rock the Vote' and is encouraging First Nations to hold information and identification clinics for their members (Tania Cameron/Twitter)

"[It's] very frustrating, and I don't think it's a coincidence; I chalk it up to voter suppression," she said, noting a similar issue is being faced by people in small hamlets, of which there are many in the riding.

She said she's advising people who can't check online to verify with Elections Canada by phone.

The Rock the Vote campaign is important because people shouldn't go to the ballot box and realize, once they're there, that they don't have the proper ID, or aren't registered, she said.

Cameron noted people in remote communities often won't have the common ID, such as drivers' licences, so the campaign has been educating people about what's on the list of ID that can be combined to be eligible.

Using confirmation of residence forms have been a big help, she said.

Cameron said she's very pleased with the number of communities that have acted on her campaign.

She's presented her information to a special Chiefs' meeting between Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Grand Council Treaty 3.

"I was able to directly educate the chiefs on the whole process and the ID requirements."

Cameron, who previously ran for the NDP in the Kenora riding, said more than half of the 40 First Nations communities in the region have contacted her to get more information about her Rock the Vote campaign.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-id-clinics-helping-people-get-properly-registered-1.3249926>

Quebec Inuit leader wins 'alternative Nobel' with 2 others

[The Canadian Press](#)

Published on: October 1, 2015 | Last Updated: October 1, 2015 6:42 AM EDT



Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Inuit leader and climate-change activist, in 2007. Montreal Gazette file photo

Helsinki — Canadian Inuit leader Sheila Watt-Cloutier was selected Thursday as one of three winners of the 2015 Right Livelihood Awards — the so-called “alternative Nobels.”

The organization cited Watts-Cloutier for her “lifelong work to protect the Inuit of the Arctic and defend their right to maintain their livelihoods and culture, which are acutely threatened by climate change.”

She will share the equivalent of about \$475,000 with Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera of Uganda for her struggle for gay rights and sexual minorities, and Italian surgeon Gino Strada for providing medical assistance to victims of war.

Watt-Cloutier, who was born in Kuujuaq in northern Quebec and was a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, is listed as a member of the board of directors with the group Canadians For a New Partnership.

Watt-Cloutier served as president of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada from 1995 until 1998 and was the council’s international chairwoman from 2002 until 2006. The ICC represents 155,000 Inuit in Canada and other northern countries.

Watt-Cloutier’s numerous awards and 13 honorary doctorates include being made an Officer in the Order of Canada in 2006.

She is also the author of a book published this year titled *The Right to Be Cold: One Woman’s Story of Protecting Her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet*.

The Right Livelihood Awards, announced in Stockholm, were founded in 1980 by Swedish-German philanthropist Jakob von Uexkull.

Direct Link: <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/quebec-inuit-leader-wins-of-alternative-nobel-with-3-others>

Cree NDP candidate Saganash entangled in niqab controversy

[National News](#) | October 1, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)



APTN National News

OTTAWA—Cree NDP candidate Romeo Saganash has become entangled in the Quebec controversy over the niqab that has spilled into the ongoing federal election.

Saganash was recorded during a recent debate in his northern Quebec riding stating he believed the niqab was oppressive to women. Saganash said that much like French settlers adopted some Indigenous practices after contact, newcomers should also adopt Canadian ways, according to a recording of the comments [posted by Radio-Canada](#).

Saganash's statement was immediately interpreted as being at odds with NDP leader Tom Mulcair's position on allowing women to wear the niqab during public citizenship ceremonies.

Mulcair and Liberal leader Justin Trudeau are both against banning the use of the niqab during the ceremonies.

Saganash could not be reached for comment.

While the debate over the niqab and so-called reasonable accommodation has raged for in Quebec for nearly a decade, Conservative leader Stephen Harper pounced on it to hold or grow support in Quebec and use it as a wedge issue in the rest of Canada.

The Conservatives are currently trying to force women who wear niqabs to remove the face covering during citizenship ceremonies. The party has gone to the Supreme Court to overturn a Federal Court of Appeal ruling that struck down the Harper government's ban on niqab-wearing during the public swearing-in ceremony.

A niqab covers a woman's face except for a slit at eye-level. The covering is used by conservative Muslim women.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/01/cree-ndp-mp-saganash-entangled-in-niqab-controversy/>

Cree NDP candidate Romeo Saganash grappling with family tragedy

[National News](#) | October 1, 2015 by [Jorge Barrera](#)



Jorge Barrera

APTN National News

A family tragedy has temporarily forced NDP Cree candidate Romeo Saganash from his riding, *APTN National News* has learned.

Saganash is currently in Quebec City dealing with the family tragedy which led to a hospitalization. The tragedy forced him to miss a local candidates debate held by Radio-Canada Thursday morning.

APTN tried to reach Saganash through the NDP campaign Wednesday to get a comment after he became entangled in the niqab controversy. NDP campaign officials could not reach Saganash. *APTN* also tried to reach Saganash directly, but he has not returned calls.

APTN has since learned that Saganash is currently focusing on his family, following a tragedy that occurred last week.

Saganash became entangled in the niqab controversy during a recent debate in his northern Quebec riding. During the debate Saganash said he believed the niqab was oppressive to women. He also said that much like French settlers adopted some

Indigenous values, newcomers should also adopt Canadian ways, according to a recording posted by Radio-Canada.

Saganash's statement was immediately interpreted as being at odds with NDP leader Tom Mulcair's position on allowing women to wear the niqab during public citizenship swearing-in ceremonies.

Mulcair and Liberal leader Justin Trudeau are both against a ban on the use of the niqab during the ceremonies.

While the debate over the niqab and so-called reasonable accommodation has raged for in Quebec for nearly a decade, Conservative leader Stephen Harper has pounced on it to both hold or grow support in Quebec and use it as a wedge issue in the rest of Canada.

The Conservatives are currently trying to force women who wear niqabs to remove the face covering during citizenship ceremonies. The party has gone to the Supreme Court to overturn a Federal Court of Appeal ruling that struck down the Harper government's ban on niqab-wearing during debates.

A niqab covers a woman's face except for a slit at eye-level. The covering is used by conservative Muslim women.

Direct Link: <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/10/01/cree-ndp-candidate-romeo-saganash-grappling-with-family-tragedy/>

Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

Nunavut Tunngavik: Feds need to back off Inuit fisheries

'Enough is enough, we're going to start implementing the land claims,' says NTI's Paul Irngaut

By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 25, 2015 8:49 AM CT Last Updated: Sep 25, 2015 8:49 AM CT



'We've been in talks with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for a very long time,' says Paul Irngaut, the Wildlife director for NTI, in reference to the 17 years of attempted negotiations to hammer out a Nunavut fishing agreement. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. is preparing to take on the Department of Fisheries and Oceans over fishing rights in the Nunavut settlement area. Officials from the land claims organization voiced their concerns at a meeting in Iqaluit of the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

"Out of frustration... we decided, OK, enough is enough, we're going to start implementing the land claims," said Paul Irngaut, the wildlife director for NTI.

A proposal from the Nattivak Hunters and Trappers Organization in Qikiqtarjuaq is before the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. The HTO wants to develop a commercial fishery for Arctic char and has applied for a licence. But NTI is arguing that Inuit don't need a license to fish.

"Under the hunters and trappers organization, they have the right to regulate their own harvest," said Irngaut.

NTI said fishing rights are guaranteed for Inuit under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, but old fishing regulations are still in place. NTI, Fisheries and Oceans, and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board have been trying to come up with new ones that reflect the land claim.



'We don't like to see anything go to court, we have land claims settlement, leave it at that,' said Ben Kovic, NWMB chair. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

"We've been in talks with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans for a very long time," said Irngaut in reference to the 17 years of attempted negotiations to hammer out a Nunavut fishing agreement.

In a Sept. 17 letter, NTI asked the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board not to make a decision on a licence for the Qammartalik Cove emerging char fishery. Instead, it wants Inuit to regulate and manage their own fisheries.

NTI points to several sections of the land claims agreement to substantiate its argument.

"An Inuk shall have the right to harvest that stock or population in the Nunavut Settlement Area up to the full level of his or her economic, social, and cultural needs," states Section 5.6.1.

Section 5.7.30 gives Inuit the right to "sell, barter, exchange and give, either inside or outside the Nunavut Settlement Area" any wildlife lawfully harvested.



If an agreement is not reached, NTI says the matter may end up in court. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

Section 5.7.3 guarantees the HTO the authority to self-manage or regulate the harvesting of its Inuit members.

Section 5.3.3 stipulates that there are only three reasons the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans or the NWMB can restrict Inuit harvesting rights, including conservation and public safety. In its presentation to the NWMB, NTI outlined how none of these reasons are a concern for the Qammartalik char fishery.

NTI also points to section 5.6.51 of the land claims agreement, which states that this proposed fishery will not disrupt existing commercial fisheries that were established prior to 1993 when the claim was signed.

The group also cites section 2.12.2, which states: "Where there is any inconsistency or conflict between any federal, territorial and local government laws, and the agreement, the agreement shall prevail."

For now, the HTO's application is with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, which has been meeting in-camera to discuss the matter.

"We don't like to see anything go to court," said Ben Kovic, NWMB Chair. "We have a land claims settlement, leave it at that."

But if an agreement is not reached, NTI said the matter may end up in court. Fisheries and Oceans will only say that they are following the fishing regulations currently in place.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-tunngavik-feds-need-to-back-off-inuit-fisheries-1.3243494>

First Nations chiefs back Eagle Spirit pipeline

By Geoffrey Morgan, Financial Post September 30, 2015

CALGARY - As other pipeline proposals from Alberta's oilsands to the West Coast appear stalled, Eagle Spirit Energy Holdings Ltd. claimed Tuesday that it now has the support of every First Nations chief along the route of its own proposed oil pipeline through northern British Columbia.

A group of aboriginal chiefs in northern B.C. declared their support for a pipeline corridor that would connect Albertan oil and gas plays with the Pacific in a letter delivered Tuesday to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the premiers of Alberta, B.C. and Saskatchewan.

The company also indicated in a release that those chiefs supported natural gas pipelines along the proposed "pipeline corridor."

"Eagle Spirit's proposal fairly compensates First Nations for the risks posed to our traditional territories through meaningful revenue generation, business, employment, education, training and capacity building opportunities promoting economic self-sufficiency for our communities and their members," said the letter signed by the chiefs.

It added that the First Nations along the pipeline "recognize the importance of alternative oil export markets to our national economy" but would "continue to steadfastly oppose all other oil pipeline proposals."

The chiefs maintained that Eagle Spirit would consult with First Nations on the design, engineering, construction and operation of the pipeline and corridor to ensure the project exceeds regulatory requirements.

Eagle Spirit is backed by the Aquilini Group, which owns the Vancouver Canucks NHL franchise, and is proposing an oilsands pipeline between Fort McMurray, Alta. and Prince Rupert, B.C. at an estimated cost of \$14 billion.

The letter included the signature of Lax Kw'alaams hereditary chief Alexander Campbell, whose First Nation's traditional territory includes Prince Rupert - the terminal point for Eagle Spirit's proposed oil pipeline and marine terminal.

Various Lax Kw'alaams members, including the community's mayor, said in June that Eagle Spirit was overstating First Nations support in the area.

However, Campbell said the group now supports Eagle Spirit, after a community meeting was held with the company in a local gymnasium this summer. "They gave us time to ask

questions, and a lot of people asked questions, and when they were here in Prince Rupert. I got up and said 'I don't see how we can let this one bypass us,'" Campbell said.

In May, Lax Kw'alaams members voted against a \$1-billion deal with Malaysia's state-owned energy company, Petronas, over the construction of a liquefied

natural gas facility in the area.

Campbell confirmed that Eagle Spirit is offering First Nations equity ownership in the pipeline in addition to business opportunities, educational opportunities and various other community benefits, like support for the community's seniors.

Eagle Spirit has yet to disclose the final details of its proposed pipeline route, but the company's press release said "the parties are presently working together to determine the final route and towards the completion of final binding agreements."

The company also established a chiefs' council, which Campbell said would vet any and all development decisions related to the pipeline.

Direct Link:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/business/first+nations+chiefs+back+eagle+spirit+pipeline/11401953/story.html>

Northern Gateway pipeline battle could set tone for future government, aboriginal relations

By Laura Kane, THE CANADIAN PRESS October 1, 2015



Scenes from Kinder Morgan's Burnaby Terminal in Burnaby, BC., June 4, 2015.

VANCOUVER — First Nations fighting to block the Northern Gateway pipeline project say a long-awaited court hearing that began Thursday will set the tone for aboriginal relations with the next federal government.

Eight indigenous bands, four environmental groups and a labour union are in Vancouver's Federal Court of Appeal trying to overturn the government's approval of the \$7-billion plan to ship diluted bitumen from Alberta's oilsands to British Columbia's coast.

Speaking just before the start of the appeal, Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs president Grand Chief Stewart Phillip said Stephen Harper's government has demonized First Nations on the issue of resource development.

"Our people have reached a breaking point, there's no question about that," he said.

"I absolutely pray that we elect a national government that has a better national vision for this country, that's more inclusive and more respectful of what the indigenous peoples are attempting to tell this country."

The bands argue the Joint Review Panel, an independent body mandated by the National Energy Board and federal environment minister, failed to adequately consider environmental threats or consult with First Nations.

Acting on the panel's recommendation, the government approved the project in June 2014 with 209 conditions, including the development of plans for caribou habitat restoration, for marine mammal protection and for oil spill modelling.

Jennifer Griffith, a lawyer for the Haisla Nation, told the three-judge panel that the proposed pipeline route — running parallel with the Kitimat River to a terminal in Kitimat in B.C.'s North Coast region — puts the nation at serious risk of a spill.

"The importance of the Kitimat River to the Haisla Nation cannot be denied," she said. "It is demonstrated by the decades of effort Haisla has put into ending the pollution of the river."

Griffith said the government has accepted in court documents that it has a duty to consult with First Nations, but didn't provide the "deep consultation" with all aboriginal applicants as it claimed.

"In order to be meaningful, consultation cannot be postponed to the last stage of decision-making. Consultation that excludes accommodation from the outset is not meaningful, and consultation cannot be merely an opportunity to blow off steam."

Lisa Fong, representing the Kitasoo Xai'Xais and Heiltsuk Nations, outlined "missing information" that the Joint Review Panel should have produced as part of a meaningful consultation.

She said the panel did not require Northern Gateway to provide detailed models showing how a tanker spill would affect the nations' waterways on B.C.'s central coast.

A lawyer for the Haida Nation, whose traditional territories encompass the remote Haida Gwaii archipelago, told court the government's approval of the project may violate reconciliation agreements.

Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson said the agreements, negotiated by the Haida with Canada and B.C. over decades, created collaborative management of the land and marine environment.

"At issue in this judicial review is whether Crown commitments to reconciliation with the Haida Nation will be reduced to mere puffery, an exercise in public relations lacking substantive content."

Haida Nation council president Peter Lantin said outside court that the government had jeopardized years of work towards building a strong relationship. He criticized the panel's environmental assessment.

"Haida Gwaii is a unique ecosystem. It's a beautiful place on earth that deserves protecting."

Some First Nations leaders vowed to stop the pipelines regardless of the outcome of the hearing, which is expected to conclude Oct. 8.

"We're asking the court to side with us, but under no circumstances will that project ever be allowed in Nak'azdli territory," said Pete Erickson, a hereditary chief with the Nak'azdli Nation.

"I'm not leaving this fight for my children."

Direct Link:

http://www.vancouversun.com/northern+gateway+pipeline+battle+could+tone+future+government+aboriginal+relations/11405876/story.html?_lsa=d8b6-9fcb

N.W.T. aboriginal leaders call on Nunavut to restrict caribou harvest

'It's just not fair for this side of the border,' says Whati Chief Alfonz Nitsiza

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 01, 2015 7:08 AM CT Last Updated: Oct 01, 2015 7:08 AM CT



The results of population surveys in the Northwest Territories this summer indicate the Bathurst and Bluenose East caribou herds are continuing to decline. (GNWT)

Representatives from the Tlicho government and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation say the Nunavut government needs to end commercial harvesting of [the rapidly declining Bathurst and Bluenose caribou herds](#).

"It's just not fair for this side of the border," says Whati Chief Alfonz Nitsiza.

Population surveys done in June and July show the Bathurst caribou herd dropped to between 16,000 and 22,000 animals this year from 32,000 in 2012. The Bluenose-East herd has declined to between 35,000 and 40,000 this year from about 68,000 in 2013.

The Northwest Territories has placed hunting restrictions on the two herds. The N.W.T. has a total harvest ban on the Bathurst herd, save for a 15-animal harvest set aside for First Nations' ceremonial use, and a 1,800 animal harvest for the Bluenose-East herd divided among aboriginal groups.



Alfonz Nitsiza, chief of the Tlicho community of Whati, N.W.T., says 'It's just not fair for this side of the border' that Nunavut has no hunting restrictions on Bathurst and Bluenose East caribou herds.

There is currently [no ban or quota in place for either herd in Nunavut](#).

Behchoko chief Clifford Daniels says he recently heard from a member of his First Nation that a plane load of caribou antlers were being unloaded at a float base in Yellowknife. He suspects the cargo was from a sport hunting expedition into Nunavut.

"We were saying 'It can't be. How?' Because it's closed for the outfitters," he said.

"That's how we got to know that there's nothing really being done on the other side."

Edward Sangris, chief of Dettah, says the territorial governments need to do more.

"I think the government of the N.W.T. is not doing enough to say to the Nunavut government, 'This is the problem we're experiencing, what can you do to help?'"

No one was available to comment from the Government of Nunavut but in an email to CBC, an official confirmed there are currently no hunting limits for the Bathurst and Bluenose East herds in that territory.

An GNWT official says the two governments are in talks about the caribou harvest.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/n-w-t-aboriginal-leaders-call-on-nunavut-to-restrict-caribou-harvest-1.3251679>

Land Claims & Treaty Rights

Supreme Court case on Metis, non-status Indian rights

By [Marc Montgomery](#) |
Wednesday 30 September, 2015

Could cost billions of dollars

The Supreme Court of Canada will be hearing a major case when it begins its fall session in October.

The suit began in 1999 on behalf of some 300-500 thousand Metis and non-status "Indians" in Canada. The case was brought by Harry Daniels (who died in 2004), the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and several non-status aboriginal who said the Crown (government) should assume jurisdiction over the group, and thus have a fiduciary (financial) responsibility under the Constitution Act of 1867.

They allege discrimination because they were not considered "Indians" under the Act and so were denied benefits accorded to other aboriginal groups.

The case also sought an obligation by the government to consult with Metis and non-status about their rights, and needs as aboriginal peoples. In other words to grant Metis and non-status aboriginals, off-reserve and urban aboriginals the same rights and access to federal programmes as other recognized aboriginals.

Those rights include:

- — access to the same health-care, education and other benefits currently available to status Indians;
- — being allowed to hunt, trap, fish and gather on public lands; and,
- — the ability to negotiate and enter into treaties with the federal government.

His case was won in Federal Court in 2013, and upheld in an appeal that Metis should be considered Indians under the Constitution. The Federal appeal court also ruled however that extending the recognition to non-status Indians should be done on a case by case basis.

Both sides then appealed that decision and it will now be heard by the Supreme Court.



Betty Ann Lavalée, national chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, says the Supreme Court's decision to hear the appeal "is an important step in the long struggle begun by my predecessor as national chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Harry Daniels. The decision of the Court of Appeal was flawed in our view, as it drew an unhelpful distinction between the federal government's responsibility for non-status Indians and its responsibilities toward Métis peoples and status Indians" © via CBC

A non-status Indian refers to an aboriginal person who is not registered with the government as an "Indian" or who is not registered to a particular band with a signed Treaty with the Crown.

The Metis are people of mixed race originating in the 18th and 19th centuries as a result of French and Scottish fur traders marrying aboriginal women.

The case has huge implications for Canada. If the highest court upholds the Federal Court ruling, it will mean hundreds of thousands of people will be entitled to rights and benefits from the federal government. This has the potential to cost the federal treasury billions of dollars.

Direct Link: <http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/09/30/supreme-court-case-on-metis-non-status-indian-rights/>

Supreme Court set to hear Metis rights case in fall session

[Ian MacLeod, Ottawa Citizen](#)

Published on: September 29, 2015 | Last Updated: September 29, 2015 6:30 PM EDT



The Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa

The responsibilities the federal government has to “Indians” could be vastly expanded under a case soon to be heard by the Supreme Court.

Canada’s estimated 300,000 to 450,000 Metis and non-status Indians want the high court to rule the federal government owes them a fiduciary duty, and that they have the right to be consulted and negotiated with, in good faith, by the government on a collective basis.

The legal action, launched by the late Metis activist Harry Daniels and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, argues that “a known and identifiable population of Metis and non-status Indians has long been affected by ‘political football-buck passing’ between the federal and provincial governments.”

The case is to be heard Oct. 8, the second day of the court’s fall session.

The dispute, which began in 1999, resulted in a landmark 2013 Federal Court judgment that declared that Metis and non-status Indians are “Indians” within the meaning of section 91(24) of the Constitution, outlining the responsibilities of the federal government, including to “Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians.”

But the Federal Court did not remedy the two other demands, over federal fiduciary duty and the right to consultations and negotiations.

The government appealed and won a partial victory in 2014. The Federal Court of Appeal upheld the lower court ruling that Metis are “Indians” under the constitutional definition. But it overturned the finding that the government also is responsible to non-status Indians. In the court’s view, a broad declaration making the government responsible for non-status Indians “lacks practical utility.”

And it, too, denied the two other demands.

Meanwhile, in written arguments for the upcoming Supreme Court case, the government says since the validity of section 91 is not being challenged, the other side is “improperly invit(ing) this court to define the legislative authority of Parliament, even though there is no federal or provincial legislation in dispute.”

As a result, “all of the (sought after) declarations are sought in a legislative vacuum.”

“The appellants ask the court to give an abstract answer — to define the meaning of a word in the Constitution, and thus to define the jurisdictional limits of a head of power in the absence of a legislative context. To do so would interfere with the free exercise of the legislative function by pre-empting its operation.”

Other appeals to be heard in the fall session include:

- Two cases, to be heard jointly, over the constitutional right to be criminally tried within a reasonable time.

In one, Barrett Richard Jordan, waited 49.5 months to stand trial in British Columbia for heroin and cocaine trafficking. His request for a stay of proceedings because of unreasonable delay was rejected by the court and he was convicted and sentenced to four years.

The accepted, standard delay is considered to be eight to ten months between committal and trial and six to eight months following a preliminary inquiry. Jordan appealed trial court’s rejection his motion for a stay to the B.C. Court of Appeal and lost.

The cases are to be heard Oct. 7.

- The Washington D.C.-based World Bank Group is appealing an Ontario Superior Court order to produce documents related to the international bribery scandal involving three former senior executives of SNC-Lavalin, one of Canada’s largest companies.

The documents are being sought by the former employees who are charged with bribing foreign officials under the Corruption of Foreign Public Officials Act in connection with a \$10-million contract to manage a \$3 billion US bridge construction project in Bangladesh.

According to a court document, the World Bank turned over information from unnamed tipsters about possible corruption to the RCMP.

Two of the bank's employees subpoenaed by the defence did not appear before the court and the bank refused a court order to hand over the documents, taking the position it has immunity from Canadian courts as an international organization.

The Supreme Court is expected to consider several legal issues, including whether there is any basis for a superior court to assert jurisdiction to compel production of confidential records of international organizations that do not reside in Canada or consent to Canadian jurisdiction.

The case is to be heard Nov. 6.

Direct Link: <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/politics/supreme-court-set-to-hear-metis-rights-case-in-fall-session>

International defence of Inuit seal-hunting, goes to EU in Brussels

By [Marc Montgomery](#) |
Thursday 1 October, 2015

A new pan-Arctic Inuit organization is took its case on seal hunting directly to the European Parliament today.

The organization called [Inuit Sila](#) is based in Copenhagen and has been defending and promoting Greenland Inuit seal hunters for three years, but is announcing today that is is becoming a pan-Arctic NGO to include all Inuit and the important tradition of seal hunting.

They took their case to the EU meeting in Brussels today, serving seal meat to delegates and announcing the expansion of the organization to include Inuit hunters from around the Arctic region.



Inuit Sila protest and information event at the European Parliament in Strasbourg France in May 2015.

© Inuit Sila

The European Union ban on commercially produced seal products in 2009 and 40 years of campaigning against seal hunting has virtually wiped out the market for seal products according to the organization.



Inuit Sila activists Leif Fontaine (Greenland) and Aaju Peter (Nunavut) shown in Brussels this week to counter misconceptions from anti-sealing campaigns and promote the sale of sustainably harvested seal products in light of the EU ban on commercially harvested seals and products © Rasmus Holm- Inuit Sila

A press release from Inuit Sila says the seal population is far from endangered and sale of sealskin is an important income for hunters living in a part of the world where you cannot grow crops. It says the annual Inuit seal hunt in the Arctic is 100% sustainable and that the catch is around 200,000 animals a year out of a growing seal population of around 12 million. It claims the seal population hasn't been this high in 200 years.



Fashion coats, boots, mittens, purses etc of sealskin represent an important source of income for remote Inuit communities. Although the EU ban excludes aboriginal hunting and products, it has promoted confusion, and combined with a decades long campaign against seal hunting, has resulted in almost wiping out the market for seal products. Inuit Sila wants to change that. © CBC

“It has always been the idea that Inuit Sila should be extended to cover all Inuit seal hunters in the Arctic, who are all affected by the EU ban. The consequences of the ban in Nunavut, Canada, are largely the same as in Greenland,” says Leif Fontaine who is a hunter himself and spokesperson for Inuit Sila in Greenland.

Inuit rights activist Aaju Peter from Nunavut agrees: “We must stand together in this one case.” She says, “This applies to all communities in the Arctic, which are severely affected by 40 years of campaigns against seal hunting and now the EU’s discriminatory ban,”



Originally from Greenland, Iqaluit -based lawyer and Inuit activist Aaju Peter, speaks with a reporter outside the European Parliament in Strasbourg France earlier this year protesting the EU ban on seal products. Peter is part of a Greenland group, Inuit Sila in Brussels this week to promote sustainably harvested Inuit seal products, Inuit Sila has also announced it is becoming a pan-Arctic NGO. © Rasmus Holm/Inuit Sila

She also sees this as part of a bigger Arctic movement of the Inuit people getting more united: “Together we have a stronger voice internationally. On the whole, I believe that we must begin to orient ourselves more toward each other from east to west in the Arctic. If we are not united, no one will listen to us”.

Direct Link: <http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/10/01/international-defence-of-inuit-seal-hunting-goes-to-eu-in-brussels/>

Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Missing and murdered: Kenora candidates respond to call for inquiry

'The answers will be painful, but I think it's something we need to face up to,' Howard Hampton says

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 28, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 28, 2015 11:36 AM ET



Part of CBC's investigation into missing and murdered indigenous women revealed 25 cases in northern Ontario, many from the Kenora riding. (CBC)

Three of the four candidates in the Kenora riding say they support the Assembly of First Nations' call for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

The riding is home to 40 First Nations and is one of 51 identified by the Assembly of First Nations where First Nations could swing the vote.

[A CBC News investigation revealed at least 25 confirmed cases of missing and murdered indigenous women from northern Ontario.](#)

Here's how each of the candidates responded when asked by CBC News whether they are in favour of holding an inquiry:

- **Conservative Greg Rickford, (incumbent)**



Conservative Greg Rickford says his party is "committed to putting an end to violent crime" to address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women. (Jacquelyn Martin/Associated Press)

"As a father of two daughters, I empathize with the deep pain the deaths of these women have caused many families. The fact is these crimes are completely unacceptable and the only real solution is to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice.

"Over the past seven years, our government has passed over 30 measures to keep our streets and communities safe — we are the only party which has demonstrated a commitment towards putting an end to the violent crime."

Rickford also said the Conservatives are helping communities develop community safety plans, raise awareness about violence among women and girls while engaging men and boys on the issue, and providing assistance to victims and their families.

- **NDP Howard Hampton**



The NDP's Howard Hampton says "there are questions that need to be asked and answered" through a national inquiry. ((Jacques Boissinot/Canadian Press))

"This is a travesty for Canada that has many implications that need to be looked at. One, do police services not take the disappearance and murder of aboriginal women as seriously as other issues? Two, what are the social and economic conditions that lead to

this? Three, as a society are we more tolerant or less interested in abuse and violence against aboriginal women than we care about abuse or violence towards other Canadians?

"These are some questions that need to be asked and answered and I think the answers will be painful, but I think it's something we need to face up to."

Hampton said an inquiry would begin within the first 100 days of an NDP government being elected.

- **Liberal Bob Nault**



Liberal Bob Nault says "there needs to be an airing of just how we as a society do a better job of protecting our women." (Supplied)

"There needs to be an airing of just how we as a society do a better job of protecting our women when they're out on the street or when they're away from home, or even in their homes.

"That's why I think an inquiry will do all of us a lot of good and we'll learn a lot from it."

Nault said the Liberals are committed to launching an inquiry immediately as soon as a terms of reference can be established.

- **The Green Party's Ember Mckillop**

"I think, personally, the reluctance to call this inquiry might be because it will bring to light some of the conditions that First Nations people have to endure and that the government is ultimately responsible for — these are policies of the Indian Act that have created the situation as we see it today.

"I think it's really important that this inquiry go ahead and that we accept what is happening and we take steps to make things better."

Mckillop said the Green Party is fully supportive of an inquiry.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/missing-and-murdered-kenora-candidates-respond-to-call-for-inquiry-1.3244507>

Red Dresses Draw Attention To Canada's Missing And Murdered Indigenous Women

The Huffington Post Alberta | By [Sarah Rieger](#)

Posted: 09/29/2015 3:56 pm EDT Updated: 09/29/2015 3:59 pm EDT



An artist is asking Canadians to take part in a striking one-day display of red dresses to represent the country's missing and murdered indigenous women.

Jaime Black, a Metis artist from Winnipeg, created [The REDress Project](#) five years ago. It collects red dresses from the community and hangs them in public spaces as a visual reminder of the women who are no longer present.

The red garments have been exhibited everywhere from university campuses to [Canada's Museum For Human Rights](#), where the Globe and Mail called the exhibit "haunting," as it looked out on the portion of the Red River where 15-year-old [Tina Fontaine's body was found](#).



The REDress project exhibition at the University of Winnipeg. (Photo: 1941Teddy/YouTube)

Nearly 1,200 aboriginal women in Canada have been murdered or gone missing in the last 30 years — 225 in 2014 alone, according to the RCMP.

In Alberta, for example, [206 First Nations women have been killed over three decades](#) — or 30 per cent of all female homicides in the province.

On Oct. 4, Black is asking for women to donate a dress to the project, hang a red dress outside their home, or wear one as they go about their day.

"Through the installation I hope to draw attention to the [gendered and racialized nature of violent crimes](#) against Aboriginal women and to evoke a presence through the marking of absence," Black states on her website.

Linda Nothing, who is helping to organize the Calgary chapter of the project, told Metro News that many [people who see the project are shocked](#) that it is an issue in the city.

"The image itself can speak to a lot of people," she told the newspaper. "If they aren't aware of the issue they are often shocked and surprised that it's happening in Canada because there is a lot of under education and miss-education about indigenous issues here."

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/09/29/red-dress-aboriginal-women-redress-project_n_8216104.html

Documentary about Canada's missing and murdered aboriginal women set to screen in Moncton



CTV Atlantic

Published Wednesday, September 30, 2015 6:12PM ADT

Last Updated Thursday, October 1, 2015 12:26PM ADT

An award-winning documentary focused on Canada's missing and murdered indigenous woman is set to screen Thursday night in Moncton. The subject matter hits close to home for many aboriginal women in the Maritimes, who are calling for a national inquiry into this issue.

Patty Musgrave is organizing the screening of the documentary 'Highway of Tears,' which delves into multiple complex issues.

"We're looking at homelessness, poverty, addiction, abuse and a lot of these women are experiencing generational abuses from residential school survivors and the issues of residential schools," says Musgrave.

Student Claudia Taylor says the idea of a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous woman is a no brainer.

"Why are we fighting for it? We are going through so much trouble and hassle for this national inquiry, it should just be done," says Taylor.

For some aboriginal women, the murder of Loretta Saunders in February 2014 hurt deeply.

"It just spoke out to me being a native woman myself," says Taylor. "This happened in our own backyard, her body was found here in Moncton. It just means it could happen to me or anyone else."

Musgrave says Saunders' death has inspired bursaries at the New Brunswick Community College – six of them, one per campus.

"Loretta was a student, she was a university student at St. Mary's who was doing her master's thesis on missing and murdered indigenous women. So the importance of that to us is to create that legacy, so that her work is never forgotten," says Musgrave.

Derika Milliea has applied for the Saunders' bursary. She commutes two hours a day from the Elsipogtog First Nation.

Milliea says she hopes the documentary makes people stop and think.

"I want them to walk away with the idea that this isn't okay, everything that is happening. A lot of people are blind to it, they don't want to know the truth," says Milliea.

Organizers say they hope to have a big turnout for Thursday night's screening and that it's just the beginning of the conversation.

Direct Link: <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/documentary-about-canada-s-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-set-to-screen-in-moncton-1.2588868>

Whistler vigil to honour missing and murdered First Nations women

News Briefs: Free 'little libraries' to be launched around pemberton

By [Alison Taylor](#)
[October 01, 2015](#)



It's time for us to step up and have a voice."

So said Linda Epp who is organizing a Sisters in Spirit Vigil in Whistler to honour the families of the missing and murdered First Nations women across Canada. The vigils will be held from coast to coast on Sunday Oct. 4, spearheaded by the Native Women's Association of Canada.

It's the first time Epp has organized something like this and she hopes it will be the first of many to come in Whistler.

"I thought there was a need to have some kind of a presence here," said Epp. "It's right across Canada but it's important to understand this is in our backyard as well."

Last year the RCMP released its study: "Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview."

At that time, the study found:

- Police-recorded incidents of Aboriginal female homicides and unresolved missing Aboriginal females in the review totalled 1,182 — 164 missing and 1,017 homicide victims;
- There were 225 unsolved cases of either missing or murdered Aboriginal females;
- Aboriginal women are over-represented among Canada's murdered and missing women.

"The report concludes that the total number of murdered and missing Aboriginal females exceeds previous public estimates. This total significantly contributes to the RCMP's understanding of this challenge, but it represents only a first step."

The vigil will begin at 11 a.m. at the Welcome Totem Pole in Village Common, close to The Keg and the movie theatre.

Neighbouring First Nations communities have been invited to come in regalia and with their drums. The group will be singing the Women's Warrior song from the Welcome Totem Pole through the Village Stroll to the Olympic Lightning totem pole at Whistler Olympic Plaza.

"It's very solemn and it's very important that we honour these women, but we also want everybody to understand that we are strong aboriginal women," said Epp, who is from Sechelt First Nation and has been living in Whistler since 1997.

"We are still here. We want to actually create more of a voice. But we also want to teach a little bit of the culture as well."

The Sisters in Spirit vigil will end at 3 p.m. at the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre.

'Little Free Libraries' set to debut in Pemberton

Since being launched last winter, the Pemberton Valley Men's Shed (PVMS) and its members have been keeping busy.

"We've done a few things," said PVMS board member Derek Walton, citing a Canada Day project that helped local kids build birdhouses as one example.

But at the heart of all PVMS activities is the Pemberton Tool Library — a free tool shed open to anyone who signs up for a \$30 membership.

The group's latest project — "Little Free Libraries" — is no different.

"A few months ago, the library decided they wanted to try putting these little free libraries out in the community, so the Men's Shed guys have put together these boxes on a pilot program," Walton said.

The PVMS has built four "little libraries" — two for the Village of Pemberton and two for the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District. It will be up to the two governments to place them.

The idea behind the libraries — which will be initially stocked by the Pemberton Library using out-of-circulation books — is simple: take a book, leave a book.

While the four boxes followed a basic design, the trim for each was done in a distinct style by members of the PVMS.

Walton built his as an homage to the Pemberton Downtown Community Barn — he hopes it will eventually be placed somewhere near its architectural inspiration.

Direct Link: <http://www.piquenewsmagazine.com/whistler/whistler-vigil-to-honour-missing-and-murdered-first-nations-women/Content?oid=2673801>

Special Topic: Residential Schools & ‘60s Scoop

Vancouver daycare teaches toddlers about Indian residential schools

Children as young as 3 and 4 learn about dark chapter in Canadian history

By Duncan McCue, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 25, 2015 11:00 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 27, 2015 2:50 PM ET



It's story time at Salal Daycare in Vancouver. Children ages three to four crowd are at the feet of their caregiver, Kristin Webster.

She tells them she's going to read *When I Was Eight*, a picture book about an indomitable Inuit girl named Olemaun who goes to residential school.

"I like this one," says one little girl with curly blond hair. "It's scary," says a little boy solemnly.



Detail from *When I Was Eight*, a storybook about an Inuit girl who goes to a residential school, by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton. (Duncan McCue)

As Webster turns the pages, with its vivid illustrations of nuns shearing Olemaun's long braided hair, and aboriginal children in uniforms on their hands and knees scrubbing floors, she gently asks questions.

"What happened to Olemaun?" asks Webster.

"She got taken from her mommy and daddy," says one little girl.

"Was she allowed to speak Inuktitut?" asks Webster. "No," the children chorus together.

When their caregiver asks how that would make them feel, these children of many different ethnic backgrounds agree: It would make them feel sad.

Indian residential schools were, for a long time, ignored as subject matter for classrooms in Canada, never mind daycares. Webster is determined to change that.

"I was not taught about it, and I'm highly offended. And we're doing these children a great disservice if we don't tell them the truth."

'Never too young to learn'

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission into Indian Residential Schools (TRC) inspired Webster to imagine a residential school lesson plan for a daycare setting.

One of the TRC's key recommendations was for federal, provincial and territorial governments to make lessons about residential schools mandatory for all Canadian kids. But even that "call to action" was aimed at school-age children, from kindergarten to Grade 12, not pre-schoolers.

"You're never too young or too old to learn," insists Webster, an early childhood educator for over 20 years.



Early childhood educator Kristin Webster says Canadian children need to know First Nations history, even the dark parts. (Glen Kugelstadt)

Webster took further encouragement from a free online course offered by the University of British Columbia called Reconciliation Through Indigenous Education.

Anishinaabe professor Jan Hare prepares teachers to incorporate indigenous perspectives into their classroom. She calls Webster's efforts to teach residential schools to preschoolers "beautiful," but emphasizes lessons need to be age appropriate.

"You may not be teaching the very horrific dimensions of this history," says Hare. "We need to give them a language to talk about it in a way that we don't frighten them or trouble some of their emotions."

That was something on parent Paul Cyr's mind when he discovered his daughters — 18 months and five years old — would be learning the traumatic century-long history of removing tens of thousands of aboriginal children from their homes to be educated in church-run schools.

"As a parent, maybe there's some caution about how deep you go, but I think it's establishing an awareness early on," says Cyr.

"It's a positive, progressive thing to start so early in the education system. At this age group, they have a strong sense of right and wrong."

Building empathy

Webster doesn't broach the physical or sexual abuses many students suffered at the schools, simply referencing the survivors as experiencing "hurts," which she says the children understand implicitly when they learn about the disruptions experienced by aboriginal families. She says children don't get emotional about it.

"At this age group, the way they deal with it is different than we would," says Webster.

"They re-enact through play, through talking to each other. I've heard they have discussions at dinner tables about land rights and residential schools," she laughs.

Her lesson plan lasts 10 months. It includes trips to museums to learn aboriginal culture, and nature walks where she emphasizes which First Nations traditional territory they are on.

'It's about building community and empathy.' - *Kristin Webster, early childhood education*

The toddlers learn aboriginal creation stories, something that inspired them to suggest carving their own totem pole. Last year, they were joined by a work study student from the nearby Musqueam First Nation, Kelly Louis, who shared stories about how loss of language and culture had impacted him.



Children three to four years old learn about Indian residential schools during storytime at Salal Daycare. (Glen Kugelstadt)

"I don't want to push my particular agenda on anyone," says Webster. "But I do think these children need to know their country, where they are, and the people who live in it. It's about building community and empathy."

Webster is now in discussions about offering her residential school lesson plan at the 20 other daycares at UBC. She also hopes to expand it, to include participation from members of the Musqueam First Nation and perhaps residential school survivors.

Five books about Indian residential schools for young readers (ages 4-8)

- *Shi-shi-etko*. Nicola I. Campbell. Illustrated by Kim La Fave, 2005
- *Shin-chi's Canoe*. Nicola I. Campbell. Illustrated by Kim LaFave, 2008.
- *When I Was Eight*. Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton. Illustrated by Liz Amini-Holmes, 2010
- *A Stranger at Home: a true story*. Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton. Illustrated by Liz Amini-Holmes, 2011
- *Arctic Stories*. Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak. Illustrated by Vladyana Langer Krykorka. 1998.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/vancouver-daycare-teaches-residential-schools-1.3243358>

10 books about residential schools to read with your kids

Stories open up 'space for conversation' with children, says educator

By Chantelle Bellrichard, [CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 26, 2015 8:00 AM ET Last Updated: Sep 27, 2015 8:47 AM ET



An excerpt from *Shin-chi's Canoe* by Nicola Campbell. Illustrated by Kim LaFave.

More and more children will be read stories about the legacy of residential schools in the classroom this year.

Provinces are changing curriculums and educators across the country are developing resource guides in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommendations.

"One of the first criteria for choosing anything is that it's a good story," said Jo-Anne Chrona. She has been developing age-appropriate curriculum materials in B.C. through the [First Nations Education Steering Committee](#) (FNESC).

It opens up that space for conversation. - *Jo-Anne Chrona, educator*

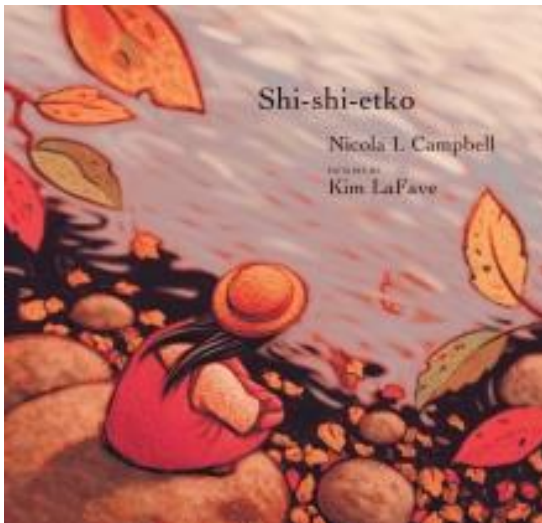
For parents reading these books at home to their children, Chrona says it's important to be mindful of what's appropriate, emotionally and developmentally.

"Talk with your children about what it is that they're reading, what it is that they understand," she said.

"It opens up that space for conversation."

The following ten books reflect on the residential school experience in different ways. They have all been identified as age-appropriate for children under 12 by reputable organizations, like FNECS and [Project of Heart](#).

***Shi-shi-etko*, by Nicola Campbell (Ages 4-8)**



Shi-shi-etko by Nicola I. Campbell (Groundwood Books)

Shi-shi-etko is a young girl who has four days before she leaves home for residential school. Her family has many teachings to share with her, about her culture and the land.

Campbell's story — and illustrations by Kim LaFave — follow *Shi-shi-etko* as she absorbs the world around her and collects a 'bag of memories' at the instruction of her grandmother. But she doesn't take the memories with her. Instead she buries them under a tree, for safekeeping while she is gone.

***Shin-chi's Canoe*, by Nicola Campbell (Ages 4-8)**



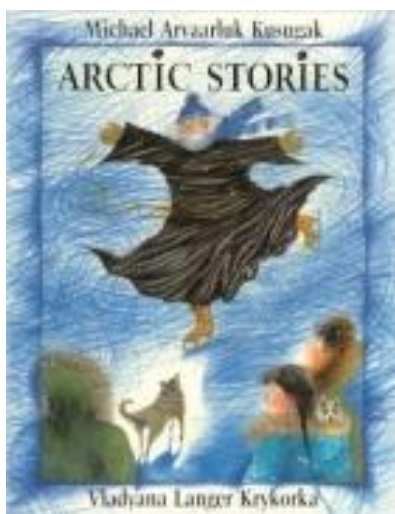
Shin-chi's Canoe by Nicola Campbell (Groundwood Books)

This award-winning book tells the story of six-year-old Shin-chi as he heads to residential school for the first time with his older sister. It is the sequel to Campbell's *Shi-shi-etko*.

As the children are driven away in the back of a cattle truck, Shin-chi's sister tells him all the things they must remember about home. Shin-chi knows it will be a long time before he sees his family, not until the sockeye salmon return.

Shin-chi endures a long year of hard work, hunger and loneliness before returning home to his family with his sister.

***Arctic Stories*, by Michael Kusugak (Ages 4-8)**

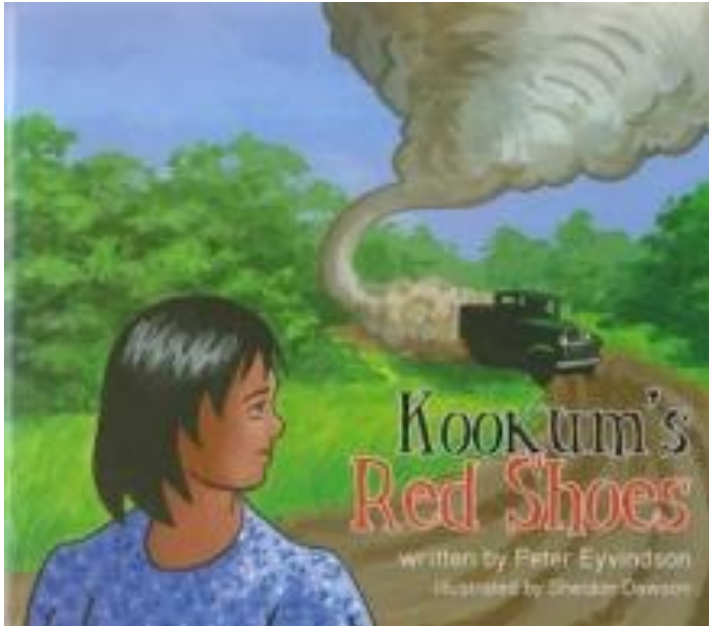


Arctic Stories by Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak (Annick Press)

This trio of stories about a 10-year-old girl named Agatha is based on the childhood experiences of beloved Inuit author Michael Kusugak. The book begins with a tale of Agatha 'saving' her community from a monstrous flying object.

The book also includes the story of Agatha being sent away for school, "The nuns did not make very good mothers and the priests, who were called fathers, did not make very good fathers," Kusugak writes.

***Kookum's Red Shoes*, by Peter Eyvindson (Ages 4-8)**



Kookum's Red Shoes by Peter Eyvindson (Pemmican Publications)

An elderly Kookum (grandmother) recounts her experiences at residential school - a time that changed her forever. The book has been described as running parallel to the story of Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. "Her tornado had arrived. It rushed up and slammed to a halt just past the wonder world she had created," writes Eyvindson.

Throughout the story Kookum reveals what was lost in her life, and how goodness persisted.

***Fatty Legs: A True Story*, by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (Ages 9-12)**

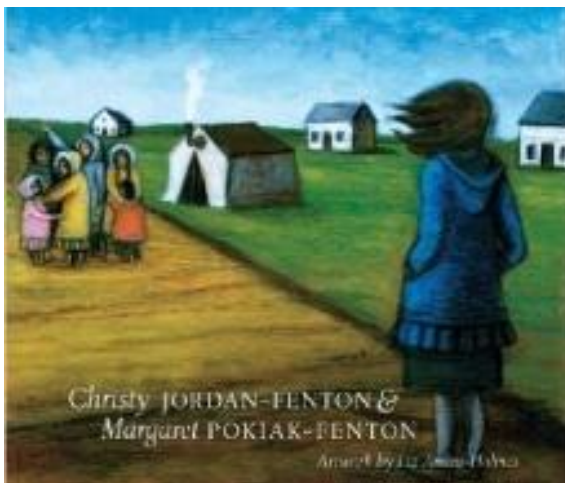


Fatty Legs: A True Story by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (Annick Press)

Margaret, an 8-year-old Inuvialuit girl, wants to learn how to read so badly that she's willing to leave home for residential school to make it happen.

When she gets there a mean-spirited nun known as the Raven is intent on making Margaret's time at school difficult. But Margaret refuses to be defeated.

***A Stranger at Home: A True Story*, by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (Ages 9-12)**



A Stranger At Home: A True Story by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton (Annick Press)

In this sequel to *Fatty Legs*, Margaret Pokiak is now 10 years old and can hardly wait to return home from residential school. But her homecoming is not what she hopes for. "Not my girl," is what her mother says when she arrives.

The story follows Margaret as she moves through feelings of rejection and tries to reconnect with her family, language and culture.

***No Time to Say Goodbye: Children's Stories of Kuper Island Residential School*, by Sylvia Olsen (Ages 9-12)**



No Time To Say Goodbye by Sylvia Olsen (Sono Nis Press)

This collection of fictional stories of five children sent to residential school is based on real life experiences recounted by members of the Tsartlip First Nation in B.C.

The children cope as best they can at Kuper Island Residential School but it's a far cry from the life they're used to.

The book is described as sometimes funny, sometimes sad.

***As long as the Rivers Flow*, by Larry Loyie (Ages 9-12)**

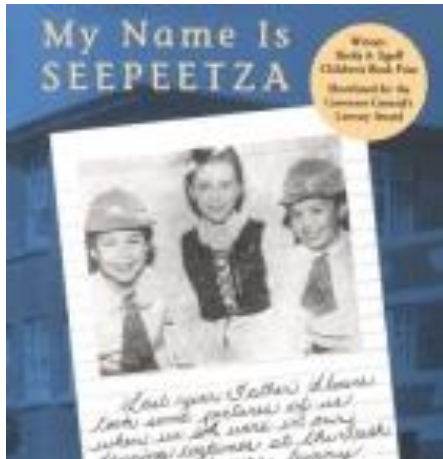


As Long as the Rivers Flow by Larry Loyie (Groundwood Books)

Cree author Larry Loyie writes about his last summer with his family before going to residential school, in Northern Alberta in 1944.

Lawrence learns things like how to care for a baby owl, and how to gather medicinal plants with his Kokom. Loyie's story highlights how his education at home was disrupted by the residential school system.

***My Name is Seepeetza*, by Shirley Sterling (Ages 9-12)**



My Name Is Seepeetza by Shirley Sterling (Groundwood Books)

Written in the form of a diary, *My Name is Seepeetza* recounts the story of a young girl taken from home to attend the Kamloops Indian Residential School in the 1950s.

Sterling's award-winning book has been described as an honest, inside look at the residential school experience - one that highlights the resilience of a child in a place governed by strict nuns, and arbitrary rules.

***We feel good out here = Zhik gwaa'an, nakhwatthaiitat qwiinzii* (The Land is Our Storybook) by Julie-Ann André and Mindy Willett (Ages 9-12)**



We feel good out here = Zhik gwaa'an, nakhwatthaiitat qwiinzii. (The Land is Our Storybook) by Julie-Ann André and Mindy Willett (Fifth House Publishers)

We Feel Good Out Here offers a personal account of Julie-Ann André's family story that includes a discussion about her residential school experience.

She also shares the story of her land, *Kharii luk*, the place of winter fish. She writes in the book, "The land has a story to tell, if you know how to listen. When I travel, the land tells me where my ancestors have been. It tells me where the animals have come and gone, and it tells me what the weather may be like tomorrow."

André is Gwichya Gwich'in from Tsiigehtchic, NWT.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/10-books-about-residential-schools-to-read-with-your-kids-1.3208021>

Critics say Ottawa has failed on Alberta residential school commemoration

[Brett Throop, Edmonton Journal](#)

[Paige Parsons, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: September 27, 2015 | Last Updated: September 27, 2015 10:26 PM MDT

Lac La Biche — Tucked away on the Lac La Biche Mission Historical site, a small plaque with gold lettering is mounted on a hunk of grey stone.

"Church, convent and residential school ministered to the needs of the Métis community and the Cree and Dene of the area. The Mission also played a role in aiding the local people to make the transition from a hunting to an agrarian way of life," it reads.

Those two sentences on that innocuous plaque mark the only place in Canada where a former residential school is commemorated as part of a nationally designated historic site. And that is a shameful oversight that needs to be corrected if the country is to ever fully come to terms with a traumatic and difficult part of its history, say critics.

"There's nothing significant about that mundane, colonial plaque," said Charlene Bearhead, an educator from Alberta and the new education lead for the National Centre of Truth and Reconciliation. "In fact, I find it contrary to anything that would be healing or reconciliatory in that it's the very symbol of the colonizers that perpetrated residential schools on aboriginal people."

Bearhead said the federal government needs to erect markers across Canada at the sites of many of the 139 former residential schools, created with the input of survivors or members of their communities, paid for by the federal government.

“The federal government needs to officially recognize that that is a valid way of commemorating, and to accept and acknowledge in a respectful way that those are the official words, that this is the official marker, whatever it may look like, for that particular residential school,” she said.

Bearhead said both indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians are already taking commemoration of the sites into their own hands, but that it’s past time the federal government played a bigger role. She said the only barrier to appropriate commemoration is political will.

“Indigenous people and communities are fully capable of identifying exactly what they want to see in that process. The federal government just needs to find a way somehow to respect someone other than themselves.”

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report, released in July, urged changes to Canada’s heritage policies, charging that commemoration is usually done through “colonial eyes.”

The report calls for a national plan to memorialize residential school sites and for indigenous perspectives to be incorporated into how Canada tells its history.

It also recommended the Historic Sites and Monuments Act be amended to include First Nations, Inuit and Métis representatives on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, the body which helps the environment minister determine which sites receive heritage designation.

Trina Cooper-Bolam, a Carleton University PhD student whose research on residential school commemoration was cited by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, said Canada’s network of historic sites “ignores” the schools because it is too focused on “agricultural and industrial progress.”

“It seems crazy that we have this program of national historic commemoration that just doesn’t commemorate these places,” Cooper-Bolam said. “We should be commemorating ... our sites of trauma and making healing possible on those sites.”

The Lac La Biche Mission, about 220 kilometres northeast of Edmonton, was only a residential school for four years under the Grey Nuns in the late 1890s. After that, the Grey Nuns were moved to a school in Saddle Lake and nuns from the Daughters of Jesus order arrived and opened a school that was attended by both Métis students and children of European immigrants from 1905 until 1963.

The convent, which served as the original school, and several other whitewashed buildings still stand on the picturesque lakeside site. Carefully preserved and restored by a dedicated local historical society, the site received national historic status in 1989. But not “on the basis of its role as a residential school,” Parks Canada says.

Two First Nations have applied to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada for national historic designation for former residential schools since 1996.

But internal reports obtained by the Journal, say decisions on the commemoration of residential school sites was considered before being shelved, pending further study.

The documents also show that the monuments board has been studying the possibility of commemorating residential schools since 2002, although it is unclear how much work has been done.

Parks Canada spokesman Eric Magnan said, at the board's request, documents related to residential schools have been gathered and indigenous representatives and historians have been consulted to pinpoint sites for national heritage designation. But no decisions have been made.

Sophie Pierre, former chief commissioner of the British Columbia Treaty Commission, said it's not surprising Canada's historic places downplay residential schools.

"Heritage societies ... want to acknowledge the positive things about Canada, but not necessarily the more challenging aspects of our history," Pierre said.

In 1996, Pierre's community, Ktunaxa Nation, pursued national historic site status for the former St. Eugene Residential School.

As administrator and chairwoman of Ktunaxa Nation Council, Pierre was helping to transform the building into what it is today: a high-end hotel flanked by a casino and championship golf course.

Ktunaxa sought federal heritage designation for the structure, built in 1912 near Cranbrook, B.C., to give "added reason for people to stop in."

The application to the monuments board, a division of Parks Canada, also requested funding to help restore the building.

The monuments board deemed that the structure, which served as a residential school until 1970, "had lost much of its integrity and therefore could not be considered of national historic significance on architectural grounds."

But thought was given to commemorating "the theme of residential schools" at St. Eugene pending further study of the topic, Magnan wrote.,

Nearly 20 years later, the community has not got a final answer.

In Manitoba, Long Plain First Nation Chief Dennis Meeches is working to turn the 100-year-old former Portage la Prairie Residential School, once attended by his mother, into a museum with federal heritage designation.

He wants the museum to recognize the suffering endured by at least 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children in Canada's residential schools, including his mother.

Meeches applied for national historic site status and funding to help restore the former school in 2002, but once again, the monuments board deferred, pending further research.

Meeches plans to resume talks this fall with the government board.

"They can't be afraid of the dark history," he said. "They have to tell the good and the bad."

He said Long Plain First Nation won't allow the school's history to be "sanitized" like the Lac La Biche plaque.

"All we're wanting is that the site is ultimately declared national historic status and leave it to our people to tell their story," he said. "It won't be the monuments board of Canada telling that story."

The National Commemorative Marker Project, led by the Assembly of First Nations and Aboriginal Healing Foundation, hopes to place a marker at every former residential school site across the country.

With \$20 million from the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, five indigenous artists designed a circular, sand-cast bronze marker with two rows of braids on the outside and imagery inside that spans a range of indigenous cultures.

"We've totally departed from the idea of the plaque ... and we've created an object that has spirit," said France Trépanier, one of the artists, in a film about the project.

At the Lac La Biche Mission, Shari Hill, board president for the historical society, said she would like to see the plaque updated, a plan already in the works, the monuments board says. However, she doesn't think the current text should be erased.

Hill said it's worth keeping the original plaque and placing a new one, with updated language, next to it so people can see how the understanding of history has changed over the years.

"Embrace the past so that we're not doomed to repeat it," she said. "Keep these sites as something that people can visit to see what happened over the years, how people learned over the years."

Direct Link: <http://edmontonjournal.com/news/national/critics-say-ottawa-has-failed-on-alberta-residential-school-commemoration>

Thunder Bay First Nations people, allies mark Orange Shirt Day

Event raises awareness of the legacy of residential schools

[CBC News](#) Posted: Sep 30, 2015 6:11 PM ET Last Updated: Sep 30, 2015 6:11 PM ET



Residential school survivors take centre stage in advance of the Orange Shirt Day walk. The Day raises awareness for the legacy of residential schools. (Heather Kitching/CBC)

Wearing orange T-shirts that read "All children matter" some 200 aboriginal people and their allies walked from City Hall to Pope John Paul II Senior Elementary School in Thunder Bay, Ont. on Wednesday to raise awareness about the legacy of residential schools.

The elementary school was once the site of the St. Joseph's residential school.

"I have physical, sexual, emotional marks on me, and every time I come here that little boy wants to come out and scream and yell and strike out at authority," said 72-year-old St. Joseph's survivor Jim Chicago, as participants gathered for the walk.

"Today I follow our way and not the Christian way, and it's helped me a lot," he said, adding he has now been married for more than 30 years and has relationships with all of his children. "I can walk around with a sort of emotional stable mind today,"

Chicago said he was participating in the walk to help pass on knowledge about residential school to younger generations.



Residential school survivor Jim Chicago says he took part in Orange Shirt Day to help teach younger generations about the legacy of residential schools. (Heather Kitching/CBC)

"For me, the walk is nothing. The pain of walking at 72-years-old is nothing compared to the pain I received at residential school," said an emotional Chicago. "So I do it for the kids."

Nishnawbe Aski Nation deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum said it's important for young people to understand their history. She said the presence of youth at the walk was encouraging for survivors.

One young person who attended, Dennis Franklin Cromarty student Breanna Meekis, said she took part because when students believe nobody cares about them, it can lead to suicide. She said the walk was an important way to let them know people care.

The orange T-shirts worn by participants symbolize an item of clothing worn by six-year-old Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, whose brand new orange shirt, gifted to her by her grandmother, was taken from her on her first day of residential school in British Columbia.

Direct Link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/thunder-bay-first-nations-people-allies-mark-orange-shirt-day-1.3251133>

Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

Celebrating Native American Day

The fourth Friday each September is Native American Day.



Dancers at Fort Totten Days powwow held each July.

Posted Sep. 25, 2015 at 1:38 PM

The fourth Friday each September is Native American Day.

Recognition of Native American Day, aka American Indian Day, is growing in popularity throughout the country.

Its history dates back into the early 1900s. Many claim the holiday's roots go back to 1902 and the League of Woodcraft Indians, an American youth program for non-Indians that was the forerunner of the popular Boy Scouts organization, founded in 1910.

It was 1913 when a group of Black Foot Indians from Montana traveled 4,000 miles on horseback asking for the nation's governors to establish a holiday honoring American Indians.

In December of 1914, the proposal was adopted by 24 states in the country.

A year later at a meeting of the American Indian Association in Lawrence, Kan. it was sanctioned by that organization.

Several states have individually made Native American Day an official state holiday.

Some states celebrate it on or around the second Monday of October rather than recognizing Columbus Day.

In 1989 the South Dakota legislature unanimously passed legislation proposed by then Governor George S. Mickelson to proclaim 1990 as the "Year of Reconciliation" between Native Americans and whites, to change Columbus Day to Native American Day and to make Martin Luther King's birthday into a state holiday. Since 1990 the second Monday in October has been celebrated as Native American Day in South Dakota.

In 1994 the state General Assembly established the fourth Monday in September of each year is to be especially observed in Tennessee as "American Indian Day"

In 1968, Ronald Reagan signed a resolution calling for a holiday called American Indian Day, to be held the Fourth Friday in September. In 1998, the California Assembly passed AB 1953, which made Native American Day an official state holiday.

There are those who celebrate Thanksgiving as Native American Day. The fourth Thursday of November, observed as a legal holiday in the United States to commemorate the feast held at Plymouth in 1621 by the Pilgrim colonists and members of the Wampanoag people and marked by the giving of thanks to God for harvest and health.

Direct Link: <http://www.devilslakejournal.com/article/20150925/NEWS/150929175>

\$2 Million For Native American Schools In New Mexico

By office of senator tom udall d-nm • Sep 25, 2015



Today, U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and U.S. Reps. Steve Pearce, Ben Ray Luján and Michelle Lujan Grisham welcomed news that the Native American Community Academy (NACA) Foundation is receiving a highly competitive \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to launch and maintain five schools in New Mexico Native communities. The NACA-Inspired School Network is one of 12 programs nationally to receive this award.

The funding will support five schools in Gallup, Santa Clara Pueblo, Shiprock, Eastern Cibola County and on the Navajo Nation. Based on a model pioneered by the Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque, the schools focus on preparing and encouraging Native American students to attend college while maintaining Native culture, language and community. A total of \$472,806 will be awarded in the first year, and the grant is expected to be renewed at \$523,222 for years 2-4 if the schools continue to meet the grant's objectives. The network plans to serve a total of 1,080 students by the fourth year.

"Students in our Tribal communities deserve a high-quality education to prepare them for success in college, careers, and wherever else life may take them," said Udall, who serves on the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. "Innovative Tribal schools like the Native American Community Academy give Native students and their families an education option that reflects Tribal culture and community values, and I'm excited that this funding will help expand their successful model to more students throughout New Mexico."

"I have seen firsthand how Native American Community Academy students thrive with a sense of community and an education that focuses on their own cultural traditions and values," Heinrich said. "This grant will allow that successful model of high-quality

education to be replicated at other sites in New Mexico to prepare our students in Indian Country for bright futures.”

“A vast array of cultures and heritages is a unique New Mexico asset; we must protect this legacy,” Pearce said. “It is critically important that Native American students have the opportunity to learn about their heritage. This grant will better prepare them for higher education, so that they have the opportunity to return to, and enhance their communities. It will also ensure that Native American schools receive the support they need to accomplish their mission. I am pleased that this well-deserved grant has received approval and I will continue to help support similar efforts in the future.”

“These important federal funds will help provide Tribal students with the skills they need to compete in the 21st century economy while reflecting the important role that their rich heritage, language and culture plays in their communities,” Luján said. “Investments like this one are an essential part of our efforts to unlock greater opportunities for our children through a quality education.”

“The Native American Community Academy has been successful in Albuquerque because it was built in a collaborative effort led by Native Americans to educate Native Americans,” Lujan Grisham said. “I’m thrilled that this concept will expand throughout New Mexico with the help of this grant.”

The new grant funding will help provide school startup services, a Native college-preparatory teaching and learning framework, school leadership support, performance management, and financial and operational support.

The NACA-Inspired School Network consists of four charter and Bureau of Indian Education schools: Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque; Dream Diné Charter School in Shiprock; Dził Dit Ł’ooí School of Empowerment, Action and Perseverance (DEAP) on the Navajo Nation; and Kha-p’o Academy at Santa Clara Pueblo. The network also supports two emerging schools: the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics (STEAM) Academy serving Acoma and Laguna Pueblos in Eastern Cibola County; and Six Directions Indigenous School in Gallup.

Direct Link: <http://krwg.org/post/2-million-native-american-schools-new-mexico>

Detroit American Indian group looks to capture heritage

Matt Helms, Detroit Free Press 10:31 p.m. EDT September 25, 2015

Indian Heritage Day planned for Saturday in Westland



A Detroit agency that has provided a sense of community for the region's American Indians is celebrating its 75th anniversary and launching an effort to preserve the stories of the thousands of people it has served over the years.

The North American Indian Association of Detroit, located in a humble brick building on Plymouth on the city's west side, was created in 1940 as a social outlet for Native Americans flocking to Detroit for manufacturing jobs from tribes across Ontario and the Midwest. They left their home reservations or government-funded boarding schools to make new lives in a city that put the nation on wheels and fueled the war effort.

The agency grew beyond its original social and cultural mission to become a registered non-profit that provides help in finding jobs and job training as well as emergency food, shelter and clothing for those in need, said its executive director, Brian Moore. NAIA also provides educational outreach, sharing native culture and heritage with area schools.

Now, with many of the community's elders approaching the end of their lives, Moore and the NAIA's board president, Linda Schuyler, said they want to mark such an auspicious anniversary with a three- to five-year project to collect the stories behind the history of the NAIA in Detroit.

"We've tried to look at the deep history that NAIA has here in the Detroit area -- how it started, and why they started it, what took place, that whole sense of community when it began," Moore said Thursday. "So much has taken place over the years. We want to capture that. We want to be able to give it to those who come after us.

"There's a teaching," Moore adds, "that says we're responsible for the next seven generations. What are we doing today that's going to benefit the kids of tomorrow?"

The NAIA will host Native American Heritage Day from 1-5 p.m. Saturday at Nankin Mills Interpretive Center in Westland. The free event will feature dance, arts and crafts and interpretive exhibits, along with traditional foods for purchase.

The group will use the event to launch the larger Legacy Project. Moore and Schuyler said they're hoping to get the word out to the descendants of founding NAIA members

who have artifacts, documents and photos that tell the story of the group through the years that could be donated to the agency. NAIA is also seeking help from community and philanthropic organizations to help finance the effort.

The group also expects to have videographers capture life stories from elders, adding a level of permanence to the historical record of a culture that traditionally relied on oral history, Moore said.

Today, the NAIA of Detroit is smaller than it was at its peak in the 1970s and 1980s, when it served as a hub for thousands of Native American families in metro Detroit. Moore said about 400 people are active supporters, although many more come in for community events. Members come from Ojibway, Oneida, Mohawk, Iroquois and other tribes in Canada and the United States.

When major issues arise that affect the American Indian community at large, "we become a gathering place," Schuyler said. "Indians from all over the state come."

In addition to the legacy project, NAIA is partnering with Detroit-based American Indian Health and Family Services and Michigan State University's Native American Institute on a months-long needs assessment -- a project to determine how many Native Americans live in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties and what social-service and cultural needs they may have. Moore said the agencies will use that information to better understand their communities and tailor services accordingly.

While the community may be smaller in metro Detroit than it once was -- with some members moving back to tribal lands or assimilating into larger society -- Schuyler said there's still a need for groups that provide assistance to Native Americans.

"We're here," she said, "because we're supposed to be."

Direct Link:

<http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2015/09/25/detroit-american-indian-group-heritage/72746118/>

Indigenous People in Guatemala in Protests that Lead to Resignation of President

[Rick Kearns](#)

9/25/15

Indigenous people in Guatemala were in the front lines of anti-government protests in late August, just a week before the resignation of President Otto Perez Molina on

September 2. Perez Molina was then arrested on charges that he participated in a multi-million dollar fraud scheme.

But indigenous activists, along with tens of thousands of other Guatemalans, had been protesting against many of his policies since the Spring, which culminated in three days of non-stop protests from August 25-27.

Both individuals activists like Quiche writer, human rights leader and Anthropologist Irma Velazquez Nimatuj and groups such as the national Mayan organization known as Waqib Kej' published detailed critiques of how Perez Molina and his administration had repressed and been involved with murders of indigenous people.

In a ten point memo addressed to Perez Molina, published in May, the Waqib Kej' representatives asserted that, among other things: "During the time of your governing, general poverty was not reduced but stayed at 53 percent for the total population and, in the regions most densely populated by indigenous, poverty reached 80 percent; you militarized the administration of your government and public security and, as a result, general and organized violence averaged 11 homicides per day and 70 percent of citizens suffered extortion and the cases of violence against women and children increased; your government murdered the indigenous brothers of Totonicapan, you permitted the massacre of nine people in Pajoquez, San Juan Sacatepequez...; and you criminalized social dissent...and now more than 40 community leaders are imprisoned."

A few months later during the August protests, Velazquez Nimatuj published a column in a national Guatemalan publication entitled "Otto Perez Molina: You lie! "Deep Guatemala" was never the center of your government." In her op-ed column the writer provided a long list of charges of racism, murder, repression and theft against Perez Molina including a mention of how the president had denied that there had ever been genocide in Guatemala during the reign of Efraim Rios Montt.

"...you insisted publicly that in "Deep Guatemala" genocide had not been committed despite the almost one thousand items of proof, scientific evidence and testimonies from survivors that showed how he planned, persecuted and massacred the Ixil People (Maya) during the armed internal conflict..."

Some other protestors had also made connections between Perez Molina and Rios Montt but the main focus was the current administration.

Starting on Tuesday, August 25, Mayan, Quiche and other Indigenous Peoples started marching, shutting down highways and presenting speeches throughout the country. They were part of the Popular and Social Assembly (PSA) that included 72 rural and indigenous organizations from every region of Guatemala, along with thousands of university students and others.

In their flyer announcing the protests the PSA called Perez Molina a "shameless thief and murderer" and called for his immediate resignation. The flyer also asserted that the long

walks and mobilizations would occur on the 25th and 26th, ending with a massive protest in the capital, Guatemala City, where protestors would set up demonstrations “in the four cardinal corners” of the city.

According to press sources, starting on the 25th groups of between 50 to 100 people were blocking main thoroughfares near the towns of Zunil, El Zarco and Nahaluate. Other examples include blockades of highways such as in Alta Verapaz in the north, Cuyotenango in the south and Coatepeque in the west.

At the same time in the center of the city of Quetzalentango, over 800 university students called for the immediate resignation of the president and suspension of the upcoming elections, while protestors shut down roads from the four cardinal directions leading into Guatemala City.

All of the protests mentioned the need for a National Constituent Assembly for a “profound reform of the Constitution of the Republic.”

While protestors did celebrate the resignation of Perez Molina on September 3, their other call for the National Constituent Assembly has not happened as of press time.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/09/25/indigenous-people-guatemala-protests-lead-resignation-president-161860>

Indigenous Leaders Want Pope Francis To Rescind Bull Justifying Imperialism

The Doctrine of Discovery, which allowed taking indigenous land 500 years ago, still underpins Indian law in the U.S.

[Julian Brave NoiseCat](#) Native Issues Fellow, The Huffington Post
Posted: 09/25/2015 04:45 PM EDT | Edited: 09/27/2015 10:44 AM EDT



Ahead of Pope Francis’ arrival in Philadelphia, indigenous leaders from across the Americas -- from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in upstate New York to the Qom

Nation in Argentina and many places in between -- have gathered in the city to urge the pontiff to rescind the Doctrine of Discovery, a series of papal bulls from the 15th century that justified European colonization of newly "discovered" lands. One particular [papal bull](#), issued by Pope Nicholas V in 1455, authorized Christian nations "to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all ... enemies of Christ," take their land and "reduce their persons to perpetual slavery."

The doctrine played a central role in centuries of colonization the world over and resulted in immense loss of land and life by indigenous peoples across the Americas.

"While our people were planting corn, they were planting flags," Oren Lyons, faithkeeper of the Onondaga Nation, said in an interview with The Huffington Post.

"The Doctrine of Discovery, from my point of view, from a religious point of view, is the justification for Christians taking the lands of non-Christian people," said Phil Arnold, a professor of religion at Syracuse University.

Long used as a religious backing by colonial powers, the doctrine became the centerpiece of property and Indian law in the United States following the 1823 Supreme Court case [Johnson v. M'Intosh](#), Arnold explained. In that case, Justice John Marshall used the doctrine to support the majority opinion of the court, which found that Indians had a right to occupy, but could not own, the ancestral homelands where their people had lived, loved, worshipped, married, mourned and died for millennia.

"Since that time, the Doctrine of Discovery has basically been the mechanism by which Native people are denied access to their own lands and denied their own rights to be in their own lands," Arnold said.

The doctrine has had a significant influence on Indian law and set a precedent that resonates even in modern decisions. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg -- widely considered the most liberal justice on the Supreme Court -- even cited cases based upon the doctrine as recently as 2005 to deny a [land claim](#) brought before the court by the Oneida Nation.

For many native leaders today, the doctrine is a fundamental impediment to the realization of indigenous rights to lands, resources and sovereignty. As they gather in Philadelphia for ceremonies and protests, indigenous leaders are hopeful that Pope Francis, who has established himself as a voice for social justice and equality, will listen.

Indeed, Francis has made multiple attempts during his papacy to atone for wrongs committed by the Church against indigenous peoples.

During his visit to Ecuador in July, Francis [apologized](#) for the "grave sins" committed "against the native peoples of America in the name of God." And he voiced his support for indigenous rights during his [speech to Congress](#) Thursday, stating, "Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected. For those

peoples and their nations, from the heart of American democracy, I wish to reaffirm my highest esteem and appreciation.”

But now, some indigenous leaders are insisting that words of solidarity and support are not enough. They are asking the pope to take actions to rescind and repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, which would be a step towards implementing the Pope's statements and apologies to indigenous peoples.

They have pointed out that many other Christian denominations and organizations have [already done so](#), including the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, the Unitarian Universalists, the World Council of Churches, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends -- just to name a few.

The Vatican has [yet to publicly address](#) the doctrine, and while it is unlikely that Pope Francis will do so, indigenous leaders are still pushing for what they believe is right.

"It would relieve a great deal of suffering," Lyons said.

It might also be a revolutionary act -- for a rather revolutionary pope.

"The pope repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery might have the effect of pulling the rug out from these legal frameworks that are all built on top of that religious or theological perspective," Arnold said. "And then there might be a future for further conversations -- in churches or in a variety of parishes -- that might spark a conversation about what justice would mean for indigenous peoples around the world."

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/pope-francis-doctrine-of-discovery_56058eb9e4b0dd8503076c17

Hawaiian culture-based mediation won't be an option for those charged in telescope protest

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

September 23, 2015 — 6:15pm

Text size

HONOLULU — A form of mediation based in Hawaiian tradition won't be an option for protesters arrested for blocking construction of a giant telescope.

The state won't participate in the mediation known as hooponopono, said Josh Wisch, spokesman for the state attorney general's office, in a statement Wednesday.

Proceeding with hooponopono is no longer a "constructive option," he said.

Hooponopono is traditionally used within families to work out differences, using prayer and discussion.

Three defendants asked for the practice as an alternative to a trial. It seemed likely to happen after Hawaii County Prosecutor Mitch Roth supported the idea.

Roth had said it would only be used for about 20 people charged with obstruction in April. There have been subsequent arrests in the battle to build the telescope on Mauna Kea, a mountain many Native Hawaiians consider sacred.

"Hooponopono was first raised several months ago, when the legal landscape was different," Wisch's statement said. "There are now are cases related to Mauna Kea pending in multiple courts in multiple jurisdictions, enforcement actions have been taken and challenged, and additional individuals and groups with no connection to the defendants who first requested hooponopono have asked to engage in a dialogue regarding stewardship of the mountain."

Roth couldn't immediately be reached for comment on the state's decision.

A total of 31 people were arrested in April when protesters blocked workers from accessing the construction site near Mauna Kea's summit for the planned \$1.4 billion Thirty Meter Telescope. Roth's office later moved to dismiss trespassing charges for 10 defendants.

Roth said hooponopono was being considered only for the remaining 21 people charged with obstructing. A few of them told prosecutors they preferred to proceed with a trial, he said. It wasn't being considered for 12 people who are charged in a second round of arrests.

After that, 15 people were arrested for violating an emergency rule created to stop protesters from camping on the mountain.

Construction remains stalled amid the protests.

Hooponopono has been used in other court matters.

In 2006, a federal judge in Honolulu let Hawaiian groups and the state's largest museum use hooponopono in a dispute over a cache of priceless artifacts. It has been used in family court cases such as custody disputes, said Malcolm Naea Chun, a Native Hawaiian culture scholar.

Direct Link: <http://www.startribune.com/hawaii-refuses-culture-based-mediation-for-telescope-arrests/328886551/>

Peter Coyote headlines Indigenous Peoples Days fundraiser Oct. 9

Actor, director, activist and writer Peter Coyote headlines an Oct. 9 fundraiser in Nevada City to kick off the 18th annual Indigenous Peoples Days, a four-day free event sponsored by the Tsi Akim Maidu tribe.

Actor, director, activist and writer Peter Coyote returns to his old stomping grounds in Nevada City on Oct. 9 for a special show to kick off the four-day 18th annual Indigenous Peoples Days.

Coyote, who has combined acting and political action for decades, will appear at 7:30 p.m. in a public performance and fundraiser to support Indigenous Peoples Days, a free event sponsored by the Tsi Akim Maidu tribe.

The performance, which will include antics and excerpts from Coyote's new book, "The Rainman's Third Cure," will be at 6:45 p.m. at the Yuba River Charter School Auditorium at 505 Main St.

The fundraiser will follow a public round dance in the streets of Nevada City on the corner of Union and Broad streets, part of the 6 p.m. opening ceremony for Indigenous Peoples Days.

After the ceremony and dance, people are invited to walk two blocks to the fundraiser.

In addition to Coyote, who will sign copies of his book after the show, other performers will be Neena McNair and the Family singers, a women's drum collective dedicated to strengthening and healing the connection to all life through the Mother drum. Also onstage will be Chairman Don Ryberg of the Tsi Akim Maidu, spiritual elder Fred "Coyote" Downey and local singer/songwriter Anni McCann.

Coyote, who has worn many hats over the years and who is an ordained Zen Buddhist priest, is coming at the invitation of Downey, his old friend. Coyote is also a friend of local resident, poet laureate and Buddhist Gary Snyder.

Food and drinks will be available. A raffle and silent auction will be held, with proceeds to support the tribe. Tickets for the fundraising event are \$15 advance/\$20 at the door, and can be purchased at The Book Seller in Grass Valley, Yabobo in Nevada City, both SPD markets (Nevada City and Grass Valley) and at Mother Truckers in North San Juan.

For more information, call 530-274-7497, or email ipdmaidu@gmail.com.

Direct Link: <http://www.theunion.com/news/18326294-113/peter-coyote-headlines-indigenous-peoples-days-fundraiser-oct#>

Pope's U.S. apology rings hollow for North American First Nations

By [Dene Moore](#) | [Daily Brew](#) – Fri, 25 Sep, 2015



In imploring U.S. lawmakers to show compassion to refugees, Pope Francis once again acknowledged the brutal treatment of the Indigenous peoples in the settlement of North America.

But the Catholic pontiff did not agree to a request from Canadian and American native leaders to meet during Francis's first visit to the United States this week.

And he proceeded to canonize a Catholic missionary whose elevation to sainthood was strongly opposed by many First Nations.

"We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners," Francis said in his speech at the U.S. capitol on Thursday.

"Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected."

The leader of the Catholic world offered his "highest esteem and appreciation" to those people.

"Those first contacts were often turbulent and violent, but it is difficult to judge the past by the criteria of the present," Francis said, urging his audience not to repeat the "sins and errors of the past."

The Assembly of First Nations along with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Congress of American Indians had written to Francis to request a meeting during the six-day visit.

A spokeswoman for the assembly says they did not receive a response.

National Chief Perry Bellegarde, [who has asked the pontiff for an apology to Canadian First Nations delivered in Canada](#), declined a request for an interview.

Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians, says he welcomes the message on the environment and equality, but the controversial canonization of 18th century missionary priest Junipero Serra flies in the face of making amends with American native peoples.

Serra “played a pivotal role in the enslavement, torture and other violent tactics perpetrated against Native peoples though the mission system in California,” Cladoosby says in an emailed statement to Yahoo Canada News.

“This canonization is strongly opposed by California tribes because it validates the monstrous history of the Catholic Church during that time. “

Abuses continue into the present day, Cladoosby says, and he urges the pope and the Vatican to begin a process of reform and reconciliation.

The California Association of Tribal Governments also condemned Serra’s canonization.

“The atrocities perpetrated upon our families at the Friar Serra mission continues to burden our tribal citizens with the cumulative psychological and physical impacts of historic trauma,” [the association says](#).

An apology from the pope — on Canadian soil — for the “spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical and sexual abuse” suffered by Canadian First Nations at the hands of Church leaders was one of the 94 recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report released earlier this year.

His comments in Washington, D.C., this week are the second time Francis has acknowledged the colonial abuses of Indigenous peoples. During a visit to Bolivia in July, he apologized and asked forgiveness for the “grave sins” of the Church during the colonization of the Americas.

“I say this to you with regret: many grave sins were committed against the native people of America in the name of God,” the pontiff said.

“I humbly ask forgiveness, not only for the offence of the Church herself, but also for crimes committed against the native peoples during the so-called conquest of America.”

The pontiff’s U.S. tour ends Sunday.

Direct Link: <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/blogs/dailybrew/popes-us-apology-rings-hollow-for-north-175512569.html>

Native American hoop dancer shares culture at Missoula schools



Native American hoop dancer Terrance Littletent of the Kawacatoose Cree Nation performs in the Hawthorne Elementary School gym on Friday as a part of Native American Heritage Week.

September 25, 2015 7:30 pm • By [Kathryn Haake](#)

"There's only so much you can learn from books. But today, this whole week, we are celebrating Native Americans ... and for a short period of time because we come from a background of singers and dancers ... you can learn firsthand. Never ever be scared to share what you know."

Terrance Littletent of the Kwacatoose Cree Nation, during a presentation Friday at Hawthorne Elementary

Terrance Littletent's dancing has wowed Queen Elizabeth II and opened the 2010 Olympic Games, but his top performance so far may have been at Hawthorne Elementary School on Friday afternoon.

"Every time I go, it just gets better and better," said the 37-year-old Canadian from the Kwacatoose Cree Nation, a bit out of breath.

Littletent had just finished a dance routine using 17 hoops to represent the 17 weeks the baby eagle takes to fly from the nest and strike out on its own.

"There's only so much you can learn from books," he told an audience of enthusiastic students before his Native American Heritage Week performance began. "But today, this whole week, we are celebrating Native Americans ... and for a short period of time because we come from a background of singers and dancers ... you can learn firsthand."

"Never ever be scared to share what you know," he added.

In almost complete darkness, his fluorescent face paint, neon hoops and dazzling regalia transformed into a moving story of the fledgling eagle learning to fly. The dance was accompanied by a traditional drum song composed and performed by his brother Jason Littletent.

The students could barely stop cheering for the 1998 World Hoop Dance champion.

"I had one of the Hawthorne teachers stop me on my way out and say, 'I have been here for 14 years and I have never seen so much excitement from the kids, including when (the University of Montana's mascot) Monte came,' " explained Cathie Cichosz, Missoula County Schools Native American community specialist.

Throughout Native American Heritage Week, Littletent performed 14 dances at Missoula schools and the University of Montana. Cichosz said response from students in other MCPS schools was also been overwhelmingly positive.

"I believe they learned respect for other cultures and learned to have an open mind about things that are different and perhaps (they now have) less fear of the unknown," Cichosz said.

Hawthorne Elementary was his last stop before traveling back to Saskatchewan on Friday afternoon.

"He was exhausted," said Cichosz. "He keeps himself in very good shape. He is not as tired as I am."

Littletent said the physical fatigue is worth the exchange of knowledge and art.

Littletent said his hoop dance stems from Southwestern tribes and merges with his own culture's performances. In Southwestern cultures, he said, men went into the wilderness to become warriors who would take vows to protect the tribe. After four days without food or water, the warrior would come back and share their visions through the hoop dance.

The dance, of course, represents more than the maturation of an eagle. The hoops and the cylindrical shapes he creates with them also signify the circle of life, the Earth, the sun and the bridging of cultures, tribes and ethnic groups.

"It taught me to respect myself, and respect Mother Earth and respect my elders," he said.

Direct Link: http://missoulain.com/news/local/native-american-hoop-dancer-shares-culture-at-missoula-schools/article_f028ace9-f194-5801-ae54-0f71987a3aa7.html

Iconic Native American CPD officer killed in home invasion

Tragedy has struck a former Chicago police officer who was one of the department's first Native Americans.

By: [Jeff Herndon](#)

Posted: Sep 25 2015 08:59PM CDT

Updated: Sep 25 2015 09:49PM CDT

CHICAGO (FOX 32 News) - Tragedy has struck a former Chicago police officer who was one of the department's first Native Americans.

He was killed in a home invasion in Phoenix, and now, his family is looking for answers.

The deadly home invasion is also puzzling Phoenix police officers.



Iconic Native American CPD officer killed in home invasion

The victim is Native American icon Jess Sixkiller. The 78-year-old was one of the first Native American Chicago police officers, and his family says he studied at Yale and fought for Native American civil rights his entire life.

"I mean this man was just a visionary, and that was my dad, that was our dad," said daughter Janell Sixkiller.

The grandfather and father of four lived in his West Phoenix home for 38 years. He was married to his wife for more than 50 years, who's been battling cancer.

"He was up...she heard noise, voices, sounds. She yelled 'talk to me, talk to me,'" Janell said.

Phoenix police say Sixkiller's wife called 9-1-1, told them she heard someone yell police in broken English, then she heard gunshots. Police arrived and found her husband shot to death.

His life was spent fighting for his community, and his children say He died protecting his wife.

"They fought side by side to this blessed day... We were living with cancer and still battling it and these bullets took him, took an important part of this circle that will never be complete again," Janell said.

Sixkiller was Cherokee Indian. He was a well-known advocate for Native American rights.

Direct Link: <http://www.fox32chicago.com/news/crime/24789680-story>

MSU team mapping Minnesota's Native American sites

By DAN LINEHAN - Associated Press - Saturday, September 26, 2015

MANKATO, Minn. (AP) - An artifact disconnected from place and time can be interesting as a piece of workmanship, but it usually tells archaeologists almost nothing.

"All meaning in archaeology starts with provenance," Minnesota State University professor Ron Schirmer said.

But all too often collections in Minnesota and elsewhere lack this crucial context about where an artifact was found and what was nearby. Differing labeling systems, a lack of documentation and spread-out collections confound academics and others who need to know about the state's artifacts.

Schirmer's own doctoral work in Red Wing had been stymied by artifacts cataloged in different places and systems, leaving him unable to make site-to-site comparisons. So, after years of running into this problem, he decided to do something.

His vision is grand - a database containing the locations of all of the state's roughly 18,000 Native American sites and millions of artifacts along with their accompanying notes, studies and field work.

While there have been smaller efforts to map archaeological sites, nothing on this scale has been attempted, Schirmer said. He knows of no other similar efforts nationwide, for that matter.

"It's an absolutely enormous task," he told The Free Press of Mankato (<http://bit.ly/1JdxiOW>).

The project recently received the go-ahead from the Minnesota Department of Transportation for a second year of funding, again at about \$250,000. The money, which originates from the federal government, is matched at 20 percent by the university.

The transportation department might seem like an odd fit for an archaeological endeavor, but no agency performs as much of this research.

The project, called the Minnesota Archaeological Inventory Database, or MAID, is also expected to be used by researchers, the public and the Native American community.

American archaeologists have been excavating Native American sites for more than a hundred years, but these Natives' descendants have little or no access to that information, Schirmer said.

This year, Schirmer and his team of a dozen or so graduate students will contact area historical societies to investigate how they could include their collections in the database. A year from now, they hope to have a prototype with searchable data in it. For example, you could find, say, all of the triangular projection points in the state, organized by material type.

Schirmer's initial efforts were funded by the university's "Big Ideas" campaign. At first, he only wanted to organize the university's own holdings, estimated at more than 750,000 artifacts.

But then he had a much bigger idea: Organize all of the state's holdings, not just MSU's. He figured other institutions had the same problem, and a large project could serve them all.

There is indeed a vast array of archaeological information held across the state, said David Grabitske, who works in local history services at the Minnesota Historical Society. He also sits on the advisory committee for the MSU project.

"What he's trying to do, of course, is unify a lot of that material," he said of Schirmer. "To be able to say, well, this is where all of a certain kind of point might happen to be in the state."

Since the mid-'90s, the transportation department has been making efforts to map out archaeological sites, said Kristen Zschomler, who supervises MnDOT's cultural resources unit. They're also developing software to predict where artifact sites might be.

While this data has allowed the department to be more judicious about where to order archaeological surveys, it's not enough just to know where sites are.

"We need the rest of the story," Zschomler said. In other words, is the site just a few flakes where a hunter paused to sharpen an arrow or is it the remains of an entire village? The inventory would answer that question, at least for sites already investigated, with photos and details.

A comprehensive, searchable database has been on wish lists for some time.

"I think it was one of those things that a lot of archaeologists would say, 'Oh, wow, wouldn't that be great,' but never had any clue how to make it a reality," Zschomler said. "When he came to us and presented it, we were like, 'Yes, that would really be a benefit to our agency.'"

Her department works on hundreds of federally funded projects every year, and federal law requires them to be examined for their potential to impact a historic property.

Some of the work in creating the database is drudgery. On a recent Tuesday afternoon, archaeology graduate student Josh Anderson was scanning a thesis paper that evaluated several-hundred-year-old plant remains at two Blue Earth County sites. It happened to be Schirmer's own thesis, written at MSU in 1996.

The students plan to scan hundreds of thousands of pages of documents. That's a lot of work, but too many archaeological surveys just sit on shelves, nearly impossible to find, Schirmer said.

Nearby, anthropology graduate student Andy Brown was writing guides to get new students up to speed on programming. Much of the project involves figuring out how to unify data that had previously been fragmented or used for another purpose.

For example, the team had to use sophisticated software to stitch together hundreds of decades-old aerial photos of burial mounds. The same software was used to create three-dimensional images of artifacts using dozens of individual photographs.

As an example, Brown pulls up a 3-D model of a piece of pottery he found near Winnebago and flips it around to show the inside. The team used 187 images to make it, but that was an early effort and later models won't require nearly that many.

Photos are crucial, Schirmer said, because archaeologists use different terms to describe similar features.

Schirmer said the project is teaching the students skills they would never have a chance to learn elsewhere. And it's an example of how a teaching university such as MSU can incorporate research in a way that helps students, not just faculty.

No one, State Archaeologist Scott Anfinson said, believes this project will be finished in a few years.

"Even (Schirmer) knows the scope of the entire project is a lifetime undertaking," said Anfinson, who also sits on the project's advisory committee. It could take 10 or 20 years, he said, making a wild guess at what it would take to digitize and consolidate the state's archaeological knowledge in one place.

"You're going to need stick-to-it-iveness," he said. There will also be barriers. For example, Schirmer will be essentially telling every institution in the state that they'll need to use a standardized system.

"I don't see that going real smoothly," Anfinson said.

The state archaeologist's advice has been to split the project up into smaller chunks, such as MSU's holdings and those in nearby counties. But even at intermediate stages, the database will have value. Schirmer's team, for example, is doing valuable work scanning in old aerial photos of burial mounds, Anfinson said.

Direct Link: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/sep/26/mankato-state-team-mapping-minnesotas-native-ameri/print/>

Frank Waln uses rap to share Native Americans' story

[Stacey Barchenger](#) 8:39 p.m. CDT September 26, 2015



Frank Waln was in his first year of college in Chicago when an elevator ride changed his life. He met a young woman on the elevator.

Waln recalled the woman complimenting his long hair, which, as he told this story to a crowd at the Mt. Juliet Pow Wow on Saturday, was in two braids, one hanging down each shoulder in a tapering line.

His story doesn't go the way you might expect.

The woman asked where he was from. He said he was a member of the Sicangu Lakota, a Native American tribe. He grew up on a reservation in South Dakota.

"You guys are still alive? I thought you all were extinct," Waln recalled the woman's response.

The interaction sparked something in Waln, who began researching who was telling the stories of Native American people. It was mostly non-natives, he said.

But it is not anymore.

Waln has used something nontraditional to carry on the storytelling traditions of Native Americans. He tells stories through rap, and his success has landed him space on the pages of national newspapers and airtime on MTV. His performance at the Mt. Juliet Pow Wow was his first show in Tennessee.

Behind a microphone stand, he told an audience of a few hundred the elevator story. Children chucked corn cobs back and forth like a football. Families ate corn soup from paper dishes. Vendors guarded booths filled with feather and stone jewelry.

Waln told them how he grew up poor and at first was shy behind a microphone. He earned a scholarship that gave him a big break to go to college. People told him to be a doctor. He made it through two years of medical school before he switched to study something he loved: audio arts and acoustics.

Now he travels the country rapping and telling stories and encouraging young people to pursue their dreams. It brought him to Middle Tennessee on Saturday.



Afternoon sun replaces rain at the Mt. Juliet Pow Wow on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015. (Photo: Alan Poizner / For The Tennessean)

Vivian Tourtillott heard the music start as she was feeding powwow dancers at Little Winds Favorites booth, where she served up buffalo burgers and fry bread.

She left her apron on and grabbed her cellphone as she headed toward the man fiercely belting lyrics like "they hold our mouth shut and tell us we are voiceless" and "this country's story is written with the blood of my people."

Tourtillott, who is from the Keshena reservation in Wisconsin, had never heard Waln, who has been heralded for his ability to connect with young audiences. She liked him.

"Country musicians sing about their lives, their worlds. Like that, it's speaking truth," she said. She said she hoped Waln would inspire children to be interested in Native American history.

"They don't teach that to kids in school anymore," she said.



Sharlene Brooks, left, and Phaizon Osborne shoot darts with blow guns at a target at the Mt. Juliet Pow Wow on Saturday, September 26, 2015. (Photo: Alan Poizner / For The Tennessean)

Waln was once a child who needed inspiration himself. Now he's found it.

"You guys are helping make my dreams come true, as a kid from the res," he told the crowd.

Direct Link: <http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/2015/09/26/frank-waln-uses-rap-share-native-americans-story/72773450/>

Homicide surge colored by race: Most Rapid City murders have Native victims and suspects

September 27, 2015 6:30 am • [Seth Tupper Journal staff](#)

Rapid City's homicide surge in 2015 is exposing a deadly component of the city's racial divide.

According to statistics released by police last week, 13 of the 14 homicide victims during the past three years in the city were Native American.

Furthermore, in an interview last week, Police Chief Karl Jegeris said that in all of the cases with identified suspects, those responsible for the deaths are also Native American (in the most recent two homicides this month, the race of the suspects is not yet known because no arrests have been made).

The numbers reflect the everyday fears of people in the mostly low-income and Native American-dominated neighborhood surrounding the corner of North Street and North First Street, in the center of an area generally known as North Rapid. That intersection is where a Native American man became the city's latest homicide victim when he was beaten with a baseball bat Wednesday night and left to die on a mainly residential street corner.

On Friday morning, two young men walked along a drainage ditch near the crime scene. They gave their names only as "Indio" and "Stoner" and said they don't feel safe in their neighborhood without a gun.

"That's how it goes around here," said Indio, who is part Native American. "Otherwise you'll be caught slippin' on the streets and get jumped for money."

Eric Wild, another young Native American man who was walking near the crime scene Friday, said violence has escalated lately in a neighborhood that has a long history of poverty and violence.

"I've grown up here my whole life and it's never been like it is right now," Wild said. "It's getting crazy."

Drugs, violence on rise

Their anecdotal observations are supported by crime statistics.

The six homicides through nearly nine months of this year in Rapid City are already the most since 2012, when there were six during the entire calendar year. According to the FBI, there were 23 murders in 2012 in all of South Dakota, indicating that Rapid City was home to more than a quarter of killings that year while only making up less than 10 percent of the state population. The FBI reported 20 murders in South Dakota in 2013.

Four of this year's homicides were in North Rapid, all of them within a mile of each other in an area that can be roughly described as south of Anamosa Street, west of Lacrosse Street, north of Rapid Creek and east of Haines Avenue. The other two homicides were in central and southern Rapid City. One of those killed in North Rapid was an infant.

Another homicide this year was about four miles outside of city limits. Both the suspect and victim were white in that case, which Pennington County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Patty Garland said is the only homicide case handled by the office so far this year.

Jegeris said the city's homicide surge may be an outgrowth of an upswing in drug-fueled violence. Aggravated assaults from 2010 to 2014 in the city numbered 221 in 2010; 242 in 2011; 222 in 2012; 300 in 2013; and 296 last year. Drug arrests showed a steady rise during that period, numbering 569, 669, 734, 1,099 and jumping to 1,309 last year.

A young mother who lives in east-central Rapid City and was visiting Lakota Community Homes on Friday on the city's far north side, blamed drug use for the increase in violence. The woman, who did not want to be named, described herself as a recovering methamphetamine addict and said her young son recently found a bag of meth bag lying on the ground in her neighborhood.

"It's an epidemic with meth," she said. "People are going crazy."

Economics may also be contributing to the violence, Jegeris said. North Rapid, for example, is one of the city's most impoverished areas.

"Generally speaking, there is a clear correlation regarding poverty and an increased need for police services that is related to increased levels of violence," Jegeris said, "and that certainly is applicable for our community."

Native leaders sought

Jegeris said he is concerned about the prevalence in crime statistics of Native Americans, who comprise only 12 percent of the city's population but account for a majority of arrests. Besides their involvement as either victim or suspect in most of the city's recent homicides, they also constituted 59 percent of the people arrested last year in Rapid City and 33 percent of the crime victims.

Jegeris finds the homicide numbers especially troubling.

"It's clear to me that we need to include leaders from the Native American community in forming a community response to address the root causes of violence," he said.

He took a step toward that goal in July with the creation of the police department's first cultural advisory coordinator and the appointment of 29-year-old Native American Vaughn Vargas to the job. At the same time, Jegeris announced the creation of a Cultural Advisory Committee to be headed by Vargas. Last week, Jegeris said he hopes to have the committee positions filled by the end of the year.

Mayor Steve Allender, formerly the city police chief, said he is also troubled by the prevalence of Native Americans in crime and is considering calling a summit with Native American leaders.

"There needs to be a response from leaders in the Native community to help understand what is going on here," Allender said.

Connect youth to culture

Beyond the new cultural advisory coordinator, Allender said additional police responses to violence in recent years have included the implementation of a serious repeat offender tracking program and the hiring of additional patrol officers to focus on violent crimes.

At the street level, "Indio" views the heightened police presence as part of the problem. He said police see only his part-Hispanic, part-Native American racial makeup and his many tattoos and immediately view him as a "suspect." He does have a criminal record and said he got in trouble again recently when he was found with a gun after being released from jail. He said he needed the gun for protection.

"The police are harassing all the younger people here and causing violent people to get mad," he said.

James Mueller, a 58-year-old Native American, spoke to the Journal while bleaching a decorative bison skull on his front stoop in Lakota Community Homes. He echoed others' statements about meth as the source of many problems and suggested more cultural education to help steer young Native American people away from drugs and violence.

"We need to get the youth connected with their elders and their spirituality," Mueller said.

Back at the site of Wednesday's homicide, Eric Wild said the high number of murders involving Native Americans as victims and suspects reflects the sad reality of violence he sees routinely in his community.

"That's kind of the majority of stuff that goes on down here," he said. "Native on Native."

Direct Link: http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/homicide-surge-colored-by-race-most-rapid-city-murders-have/article_c09624e1-50ec-53c3-8a3c-ac772fb44aea.html

Bixby Library Considers Repatriation For Native American Artifacts

By [Melody Bodette](#) • 12 hours ago



Archeologist Kat Raynor, with some of the collection at the Bixby Library in Vergennes. Some of the items may need to be repatriated to tribes, under federal law.

Volunteers at the Bixby Memorial Library in Vergennes are nearing the end of a two year project to document all of the artifacts in the library's museum.

Many of items are Native American artifacts and some may need to be returned to the tribes they came from.

The museum is on the second floor of the Bixby Library, in a locked room. Inside are glass cases, and drawers and drawers of artifacts.

"We have a good amount of pottery, we have a ton of lithics. We have a case of textiles over there. The room is somewhat divided. This is the large archeological collection. These five cases comprise the Bilhuber collection," said archeologist Kat Raynor.

The collection was given to the library in 1968 by amateur archeologist Ernst Bilhuber. It includes items from tribes in western states, Alaska and Mexico.

A few years ago one of those items was stolen.

"What was taken was described as a spearhead, an obsidian spear head," explained library director Jane Spencer. "When the police came, and asked us about it, we didn't know, we had no photograph, no accurate description and realized, we need to take an inventory of everything that in this room."

The spearhead was eventually found, and turned out to be a replica, but the thousands of other items in the room are real and valuable. In addition to the Bilhuber collection, there are many Native American artifacts from local towns. Spencer says for a small

community, they were able to find a surprising number of locals with expertise to get the project started.

"When the police came, and asked us about it, we didn't know, we had no photograph, no accurate description and realized, we need to take an inventory of everything that in this room." - Bixby Director Jane Spencer

"It is amazing, an archeologist, a museum specialist, the former archeological editor at *National Geographic*," she said.

Volunteers have been weighing, measuring, photographing and creating a digital catalog of every item in the collection. They obtained a grant to hire an archeologist, Kat Raynor, to oversee the project.

Now that they know more about the collection, the next step is to consider which items fall under the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. The law says human remains, funeral or ceremonial object or objects of cultural patrimony have to be repatriated to their tribes.

Raynor says it's clear that some items will fall under the law. "We definitely know we have mortuary bowls which would be a funerary related object. We have a beautiful Sioux headdress in there from Wyoming that could potentially be considered an item for cultural patrimony. We do have one piece that we do believe to be a human remain, however, we don't have the technology to fully figure out if and who it belongs to, so that's high up on the list."



Some of the Bixby's artifacts, like this case of projectile points, come from local collections.

The library will soon apply for a grant to research the objects, to determine what they are and most importantly -- where they came from. They'll look at comparative collections,

talk to professors, and other larger institutions that have already been through the process. And tribes will be consulted, says volunteer and museum specialist Eileen Corcoran.

"Some tribes want them repatriated, want to have things back. Some tribes don't want things back at all," Corcoran said. "Some tribes want to work with institutions to store items or to keep items certain ways. That becomes the process of working with these cultures to figure out after we know what's going on, what then happens to the items themselves."

"We don't have the capacity to fully care for these objects the way they should be cared for, in terms of all of the light coming through these windows. We don't have temperature control or humidity control and that's just not good for some of these objects." --Kat Raynor, archeologist

While the law may require some objects to be returned, Raynor says the library must consider whether some of the remaining items, like textiles, should be sent to other institutions.

"Regardless, we don't have the capacity to fully care for these objects the way they should be cared for, in terms of all of the light coming through these windows. We don't have temperature control or humidity control and that's just not good for some of these objects," she said.

Many of the artifacts, including those from local collections will stay at the Bixby. Library Director Jane Spencer says with the help of an archeologist and volunteers the museum can soon create new exhibits and become an educational resource so it's no longer the best kept secret in town.

Direct Link: <http://digital.vpr.net/post/bixby-library-considers-repatriation-native-american-artifacts#stream/0>

Vandals topple Junipero Serra statue, scrawl 'Saint of Genocide' on stone

Police are reportedly treating the act as a hate crime because vandals targeted European graves only

September 28, 2015 9:17AM ET

A statue of the 18th century friar Junipero Serra was toppled and graves vandalized at the Carmel Mission in California, police said Sunday, just days after the missionary was canonized by Pope Francis.

The person or persons responsible struck Saturday night, damaging gravesites and signs and splashing green and white paint on doors, Carmel Police Sgt. Luke Powell told [the Salinas Californian](#).

The Mission said a replica of Serra and other historic statues in the courtyard were knocked over. Photos posted on the Mission's Facebook page show someone wrote "Saint of Genocide" on a stone.

The canonization of Serra by Francis during his high-profile visit to the United States, which ended Sunday, was met with criticism from some due to the 18th century friar's perceived complicity in Spain's bloody conquest of what would become California. Critics cite abuses of Native Americans [carried out under Serra's watch](#).

Under Spain's mission system, Native Americans were forced to adopt Catholicism as well as the Spanish language and customs, while Serra himself endorsed the flogging and shackling of those who refused.

The vandalism appeared to be focused on the gravesites of interred Europeans, not those graves of Native Americans, Powell said. The defacing is being treated as a hate crime, Powell told [the Los Angeles Times](#), because the vandals hit "specifically the headstones of people of European descent, and not Native American descent."

The Mission responded to the vandalism with a message posted on its Facebook page in which it called on supporters to "pray that the people [who] did this take responsibility for their actions on this sacred property and that they seek reconciliation."

On Sunday afternoon, the Mission posted thanks to volunteers who helped clean up the facility.

"Let us remember that we live in a loving community and let us not be discouraged by such things. As St. Serra said, 'Always look forward, never back.'"

The vandalism took place on the eve of a ceremony at the Mission to commemorate Serra that was attended by about 1,000 people, said Erica Yanez, spokeswoman for the Diocese of Monterey on Sunday.

"By the 11 a.m. Mass the vandalism had been cleaned out by volunteers," Yanez said.

Serra introduced Christianity and established settlements as he marched north with Spanish conquistadores. In 1769, he established his first mission in San Diego. He would go on to found numerous additional missions, including San Francisco. The missions taught religion and farming.

But the missions also cut off Native Americans from their languages and cultures, forced those who converted to Christianity into labor and brought disease that led to the mass deaths of Indian populations.

Direct Link: <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/9/28/serra-statue-vandalized.html>

The Pope's Hypocritical Stance Towards Indigenous Americans Opens New Wounds: An Open Letter

Posted: 09/27/2015 7:58 pm EDT Updated: 09/27/2015 7:59 pm EDT

[Rev. Dr. Randy S. Woodley](#), Distinguished Associate Professor of Faith and Culture, Director of Intercultural and Indigenous Studies, George Fox Seminary

Dear Pope Francis,

While the rest of the country celebrates your voice for the poor and disenfranchised, I mourn your disregard for the most disenfranchised people in North America. While you are lauded for your concern over human rights, I wonder why your concern only goes to those most identified in America with Settler Colonialism? In speaking of immigration to US Congress, you said:

"Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected. For those people, and the nations, from the heart of American democracy, we affirm my highest esteem and appreciation. Those first contacts were often turbulent and violent, but," lifting his face from the script and looking out into the crowd he said, "we know it's very difficult to judge the past by the criteria of the present."

Then, wait for it...yes, the congress applauds.

Honorable Pope Francis, may I express to you the age-old lesson that history repeats itself? People and governments repeat the "sins and the errors of the past" by not fully dealing with their responsibilities in the past. Your casual reference to the sins of America's past, while never even naming our peoples as First Nations, Native Americans or Indigenous peoples, only helps to justify and reinforce to the body to which you addressed, our continued mistreatment and our relegation to their intentions for us to fade into quiet oblivion. Your references to Jesus' words to "do unto others as you would want them to do to you" feels to me like mere hypocrisy after such an affront to Indigenous peoples. To add to the pain, each congressional applause only inserted an exclamation point to your callousness to America's Indigenous plight and serves to prop up their own justification in not dealing with America's genocidal past systemic record.

Your insistence on the canonization of Friar Junipero Serra was outrageous to Indigenous people everywhere but as we saw in your address to Congress, that heinous act simply reinforces your disregard for the rights of Indigenous peoples. Serra, a man responsible

for most of the imprisonment and colonization of northern California's Indigenous peoples, is more than affront, it is an egregious sin. You, who speak so highly of the sanctity of life and the value of family, insisted on canonizing a man who has total disregard for the lives of those to whom he was "spreading the gospel." Serra allowed his men to rape Native women and kill their objectors. He tortured and maimed those who resisted his message of Christianity, and he kidnapped children only to be reunited with their parents after everyone agreed to family baptisms into Christianity and to perpetual enslavement. Hear Serra's own words:

I would not feel sorry no matter what punishment they gave them, if they would commute it to prison for life, or in the stocks every day, since then it would be easier for them to die well. Do you think it possible that if they kept them prisoners for a time, and by means of interpreters explained to them about the life to come and its eternal duration, and if we prayed to God for them - might we not persuade them to repent and win them over to a better life? You could impress on them that the only reason they were still alive is because of our affection for them, and the trouble we took to save their lives.

Furthermore Serra was officially justified in his actions because of the Catholic Doctrine of Conquest. Pope Francis if you love justice, as God does, why not revoke the papal bulls of 1452 and 1493, collectively known as the "Doctrine of Discovery" which justified the cession of all lands "discovered by "Christians" like Serra and, Columbus? These marching orders by the church gave authority to Catholics and influenced Protestants alike, to partake in carte blanche enslavement of Africans and Indigenous people's everywhere and to justify worldwide land theft and genocide. But perhaps even genocide cannot be judged using today's standards according to your suggestion?

Which brings me to my final concern-your rationale. You say we can't judge the mistakes of the past by today's standards? But what about judging the sins of the past according to the legacy of brave men and women who have stood up for the rights of Indigenous peoples before during and after Serra's, (and other church representatives) time? Why not judge them according to godly person's of their own times? Your presumption disregards the long legacy of those whom I consider to be true heroes, who protested slavery, condemned forced mission and risked their lives to protest Indigenous people from land theft and murder. Your argument dishonor these historic and present prophetic voices. By your own rationale to disregard the sins of the past against Indigenous peoples, you dishonor the sacrifices those righteous heroes have made. Are we not to honor those who deserve honor?

Pope Francis, you are likely a wonderful person but you apparently have little sense of justice when it comes to the marginalized and still disenfranchised Indigenous peoples of America. And, sadly to say, speaking only for myself, from where I stand, the Indigenous people of America, and those who have stood up for them in the past and present, are much closer to Jesus than you.

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rev-dr-randy-s-woodley/pope-francis-native-americans- b_8204896.html

Native American boarding schools have nearly killed Michigan's native language

By [Emily Fox](#) • Sep 28, 2015



What Harbor Springs used to look like before the Holy Childhood boarding school was torn down in 2007

The original language of Michigan is dying in the state.

Anishinaabemowin was the language of the Great Lakes for millennia—spoken by the Chippewa/Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi tribes—known as the Anishinabek.

One of the biggest impacts on the language, that affected generations of families, was Native American boarding schools.

The last fluent speakers are dying off

Eighty-year old Marcella Keller is a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians. She was raised traditionally by her parents who knew how to fish, gather, live off the land, and turn wild plants into medicine.

Keller has lived in Cross Village her whole life. It's about 20 miles south of the Mackinac Bridge and sits on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan.

“Just a beautiful place where the Indians lived up in here,” she says. “Everybody spoke [the language growing up]... I was one of the fluent speakers.”

Keller is only one of an estimated three people in this area with the Little Traverse Bay Band that are still fluent in Anishinaabemowin, and those numbers are dropping.

Keller says she used to have some people she could talk to in her native language, but says “all the Indians that spoke it are dying off. They never taught it to their kids.”

One of the biggest reasons why they didn’t teach it, was because of Native American boarding schools.

Holy Childhood

Twenty miles south of Cross Village is Harbor Springs.

In the summer, the harbor is filled with yachts and downtown is marked with boutique shops. At the end of Main Street stands a church, and that church led one of the longest-running Native American boarding schools in the nation. It was called Holy Childhood.

Eric Hemenway, director of archives and records for the Little Traverse Bay Band, says the Odawa actually helped build the mission school in 1829.

He says back then, “lessons were taught in Anishinaabemowin -- the kids were encouraged to speak Anishinaabemowin.”

But fast forward 60 years, and things at Holy Childhood looked much different.

Around the late 1880s the federal government stepped in to control Native American education. They created assimilation policies that looked to wipe out native languages and culture, and that effort continued for decades.

Deleta Gasco Smith works for the Little Traverse Bay Band. She attended Holy Childhood for three years of elementary school.

"When we were in the school we were actually completely forbidden to speak the language and if we were caught the punishment was swift and it was severe."

“When we were in the school we were actually completely forbidden to speak the language, and if we were caught, the punishment was swift and it was severe,” Gasco Smith says.

Gasco Smith’s father was fluent in Anishinaabemowin, but he was careful not to teach his daughter the language. Gasco Smith says her dad went to the same boarding school and knew she would be beaten for speaking Anishinaabemowin.

“That’s how we almost lost our language, is because they quit speaking it,” Gasco Smith says.

“They wouldn’t let us speak it either because they knew that we had to go there and what would happen if we spoke the language when we were there.”

Boarding schools aim was to ‘take the Indian out of the Indian’

From the 1880s through the 1920s, Native American children in the U.S. were often forced to leave their families and attend boarding schools.

Some—like Holy Childhood—were run by the Catholic Church. Others were run by the government, like a school in [Mt. Pleasant](#) that operated until the mid 1930s. Either way, the mission was the same.

Sister Susan Gardner is with the diocese of Gaylord.

“The overall mission of the boarding school was to acculturate the Native Americans into the American culture,” she says. “They didn’t want them to have anything as far as their Native American spirituality, language customs, anything. They wanted to take the Indian out of the Indian.”

Assimilation mandates faded around 1930, but Holy Childhood still operated for another 50 years and continued to punish students who spoke their native language.

Physical abuse at Holy Childhood

Physical and emotional abuse were common.

Yvonne Keshick is a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band and went to Holy Childhood for eight years. She says there was a racial element to the abuse from the nuns.

"[The nuns] showed preference, a direct preference to lighter-complected kids. The darker you were, the worse you were treated."

“They showed preference, a direct preference to lighter-complected kids,” she says.

Keshick says those kids got special treatment, and didn’t get beaten and adds, “The darker you were, the worse you were treated.”

Keshick says she was beaten almost every single day. If she got a math problem wrong, the nun would grab her by the head and use her face to erase the math problems on the chalk board.

“I have less hair on this side of my head because the nun was right-handed, so she would reach out and grab me on the left side of my head and drag me around, and then use my face and head as the dust eraser,” Keshick says.

Sexual abuse at Holy Childhood

In the 1960s and early 70s, there was sexual abuse happening at Holy Childhood.

Fred Kiogima is a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band.

“You could hear the beatings going on. You could hear other things going on in that room that as a child, first grade through eighth grade, you had no right in society to hear those things going on the other side of the room, or in the next bed over,” Kiogima says.

“You had no right in society to hear those things going on the other side of the room, or in the next bed over.”

Kiogima boarded at Holy Childhood when a nun at the school was sexually abusing some of the boys.

“It’s like the nuns had their certain key people that they would pick out,” he says. “Those were the ones that -- the boys’ group on our side of the house -- we knew who was either having sex with that nun or was making out with her, or doing whatever. Because they got the best treatment. They got the best clothes. They got more food. They got longer TV hours. They didn’t get beat.”

Church apologizes

Sister Susan Gardner is the director of the Native American Apostolate for the Diocese of Gaylord and previously worked with First Nations tribes in Canada.

She says these stories don’t surprise her because she’s heard so many similar stories from indigenous people across North America.

“I feel badly that this has happened. I do whatever I can to heal them individually, or on a whole, but I certainly don’t deny anything that happened to them,” Gardner says.

This year, Gardner prompted the Bishop of Gaylord to send a letter to the Little Traverse Bay Band to issue the first apology from the church for what happened at Holy Childhood.

Gardner is now leading healing circles. It’s a way for people to openly share their thoughts and feelings about what happened at the boarding school.

Former Holy Childhood student Deleta Gasco Smith is also helping lead these healing circles.

“This letter from the church, and them reaching out, is a very big step,” Gasco Smith says. “It’s like we are going full circle and they want to be a part of the healing process, so that is a good thing.”

But she says the boarding schools played a huge role in the loss of Anishinaabemowin, and when language is lost, so is the connection to the remaining ceremonies and traditions of the Anishinabek.

"When you lose that language, you lose your culture completely."

"When you lose that language, you lose your culture completely," Gasco Smith says. "Because it is those songs, it is those prayers, and everything that we do in our language that connect us -- not just with each other, and with our community -- but also with everything around us."

To learn about what tribes in Michigan are doing to bring the language back, [listen to Pt. II of this story](#).

Support for arts & cultural reporting on Michigan Radio comes in part from a grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the arts.

Direct Link: <http://michiganradio.org/post/native-american-boarding-schools-have-nearly-killed-michigans-native-language>

Nursing Summit Seeks Recruitment of Native American Nurses

By miranda.vanderleest • 6 hours ago



A partnership between the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council and the University of Wisconsin will focus on the recruitment of Native American nurses through a Native Nations Nursing Summit. University of Wisconsin Nurse Audrey Tluczek says as the most under represented ethnic group in the country, Native Americans face barriers to entering the nursing profession.

"...We're hoping to bring together nurses who self identify as members of Indian, native American, Alaskan Native Groups to help us understand how to address the nursing shortage particularly within the Native American community."

Thuczek says the program will explore ways to encourage American Indian youth into nursing through networking. She says developing culture specific programs to improve the health outcomes of the Native American population is in the hands of future generations.

“...Native Americans have some of the most concerning health disparities. So one of our approaches to addressing those issues is to increase the number of native nurses to be more representative of the general population.”

Tribal educators and counselors, high school students and students enrolled in pre-nursing or nursing programs are encouraged to attend the summit November 12. To register, visit the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council website.

Direct Link: <http://wxpr.org/post/nursing-summit-seeks-recruitment-native-american-nurses>

South Dakota no longer requires kids to learn about the Constitution, Native Americans, or slavery

[History News Network](#)
[28 Sep 2015 at 15:06 ET](#)



Students in school classroom (Shutterstock)

In case you haven't heard, the [South Dakota Board of Education has dumped early American history](#) from its K-12 curriculum.

When I heard about this decision, a quote from one of the great nineteenth-century observers of American life came to mind. During the 1830s a French aristocrat named Alexis de Tocqueville traveled throughout the United States and studied the character of American society. His observations would later be published in his *Democracy in America*—a work that is just as important to our national identity today as it was when it first appeared in 1835.

In Chapter Two of *Democracy in America* Tocqueville laments the way that individualism—an idea at the heart of American democracy—destroys a citizen’s appreciation of the past.

“Among democratic nations,” he wrote, “new families are constantly springing up, others are constantly falling away, and all that remain change their condition; the woof of time is every instant broken and the track of generations effaced. Those who went before are soon forgotten; those who will come after, no one has any idea; the interest of man is confined to those in close propinquity to himself.”

Tocqueville understood that sometimes in a democratic society we become so addicted to the present that we forget where we came from. We lose touch with history—the subject that provides us with our identity as Americans.

Now that early American history is no longer part of the curriculum, it is very unlikely that a student in the public schools of South Dakota will ever read Tocqueville’s quote.

The decision of the South Dakota Board of Education seems to be based on the idea that early American history is not important because it occurred so long ago and has no relevance for the present. The Board of Education seems to think that history is merely the memorization of dates, timelines, and names.

The decision is also based on a very thin view of citizenship. How can students understand what it means to be a citizen of South Dakota or the United States without understanding that everything that they encounter in the present is rooted in a historic context?

History is more than memorization. It teaches students that current events are contingent on the events that came before them. History teaches us the root causes of the things that happen in our world today.

When students learn about context, contingency, and causation they develop a deeper—more robust—understanding of the world around them.

The study of the American past relieves us of our narcissism and helps us to see ourselves as part of a much larger human story. As the Stanford historian Sam Wineburg writes, “mature historical understanding teaching us ... to go beyond our brief life, and to go beyond the fleeting moment in human history to which we have been born.” Don’t we want our young people—our future citizens—to understand their world in this way?

Sadly, the students of South Dakota have had the very foundations of American citizenship ripped out from under them. Think about it:

- Students will no longer be required to learn about the American Revolution. How will they be good citizens if they don’t know anything about the ideas and values on which this country was built?

- Students will no longer be required to learn about the Constitution. How will they know how the United States government works or about the rights afforded to all United States citizens?
- Students will no longer learn about slavery. How will they understand race-relations in the United States without learning about the roots of the Civil Rights Movement and other black protest movements, including Black Lives Matter?
- What about Native Americans? I would think that any resident of South Dakota should know something about the Indians. As it now stands, their understanding of Native American history will begin with the United States attempts to drive the Sioux from their lands and will end with Indian reservations and casinos.
- Without early American history most of the story of the women's rights movement will no longer be taught. Goodbye Seneca Falls. Goodbye Elizabeth Cady Stanton. South Dakota students will be left with a view of the past in which women were always able to vote.

This all seems worse than the attempts in Texas and elsewhere to change the curriculum to conform to conservative or Christian views of history.

Perhaps we should start thinking about Tocqueville less as an observer and more as a prophet.

By John Fea

John Fea is the chair of the History Department at Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, PA and the author of [Why Study History?: Reflecting on the Importance of the Past](#).

[Originally published at History News Network](#)

Direct Link: <http://www.rawstory.com/2015/09/south-dakota-no-longer-requires-kids-to-learn-about-the-constitution-native-americans-or-slavery/>

Suicide Heavily Impacts LGBTQ, Native American Youth

September 28, 2015

by Tim'm West and Robert Cook



Tim'm West

When it comes to suicide prevention, awareness and support can't be limited to just one month. During Suicide Prevention Month, we honor those who increase awareness and take action in communities every day. As leaders of Teach For America's [LGBTQ Community](#) and [Native Alliance](#) Initiatives, we can't sit silent in this work. Together, we must acknowledge the work that is still left to be done.

Too often, we hear statistics that frame the inequity amongst students in our communities, but to continue the fight against educational equity, we must also face another barrier head on that impacts students and keeps them from achieving and leading successful lives — suicide. Native and LGBTQ youth attempt and commit suicide at disproportionately high rates. [Suicide](#) is the second leading cause of death — and 2.5 times the national rate — for American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) youth aged 15 to 24. [Lesbian, gay and bisexual youth](#) are four times more likely to attempt suicide as their straight peers — and questioning youth are three times more likely.

But, this is an issue that impacts all children. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly 3,000 people on average commit suicide daily. And among youth between 10 and 19 years of age, suicide is the third leading cause of death, ending their lives before they are old enough to accomplish things in life we often take for granted, like driving a car or graduating from high school.

This issue is more than figures and stats. Suicide is impacting the lives of kids, families, friends and communities every day in immeasurable ways. This hits close to home for both of us.

In Robert's hometown of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, more than 18 young lives have been lost to suicide since December, prompting the second State of Suicide Emergency declared by tribal officials in five years. He remembers the pain and agony he and his family faced when his niece committed suicide at 15 years old, more than two years ago. She hung herself in the basement of her grandmother's house. Robert continues to ask himself what more could have been done and how can we ensure other Native youth don't face a similar fate.

Tim'm has accomplished many scholastic and artistic pursuits, but not without obstacles. On a dark evening on the outskirts of Taylor, Arkansas, at the age of 16, he took several pills in an attempt to take his life. Growing up with an early awareness that he was attracted to both boys and girls, all the religious fasting and praying, all the compulsory attempts at heterosexual dating, had failed. And the belief that he'd failed God, his family and community made him feel that he had nothing to live for and amplified his silent pain.

These experiences drive our work to advance safer schools and communities for Native and LGBTQ students. Each time we hear about another young person taking their life, we relive these realities.

As we prepare our students for college and career and help to ensure all students receive an excellent education, we must continue to raise awareness of the critical importance of our students' mental health and wellness inside and outside the classroom. A student may not feel safe at school, at home or their community.

Advancing dignity for students, teaching them in culturally responsive ways that connect what they learn to the positive potential of who they are and what they can achieve should be the measure of inclusiveness that we advance for classrooms and schools. It is important that our students have adequate emotional and mental health support, resources and opportunities to share their voice so they don't make an irreversible decision.

Family, teachers, friends and community members can help see warning signs. We can all help spread information about suicide awareness and decrease stigmatization. Commit to sharing the narrative of suicide prevention in your school or local community and empower others to take action and become informed so our youth no longer suffer in silence. For more information and resources, you can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1 (800) 273-8255.

Robert Cook sits on the board of the National Indian Education Association and is the senior managing director of Teach For America's Native Alliance Initiative. Tim'm West is the senior managing director of Teach For America's LGBTQ Community Initiative.

Direct Link: <http://diverseeducation.com/article/78060/>

Why a Native American tribe can open a marijuana resort in a state where pot is illegal

Updated by [German Lopez](#) on September 29, 2015, 3:10 p.m. ET [@germanlopez](#)
german.lopez@vox.com

A Native American tribe plans to do something that's technically illegal in South Dakota, the state where the tribe resides: It will grow and sell marijuana.

The Santee Sioux tribe's move is possible as a result of a 2014 [Justice Department decision](#) that stopped US attorneys from prosecuting Native American tribes that grow and sell pot on reservations.

The Santee Sioux tribe seems to be, according to the [Associated Press](#), the first tribe to take really big advantage of the opportunity. As the AP's Regina Garcia Cano reported, leaders plan to grow their own pot and sell it in a smoking lounge that will include a nightclub, arcade games, bar and food service, slot machines, and an outdoor music venue. Tribal President Anthony Reider called it "an adult playground." The small tribe of 400 hopes to use the profits for housing, a clinic, and addiction treatment.

But there's a big uncertainty: Only the current administration's guidance is allowing the tribe's new venture without federal interference. What if the next administration isn't so tolerant?

It is the Obama administration — specifically, President Barack Obama's Department of Justice — that enabled the Santee Sioux tribe's move. So the tribe's new business model will likely be fine until January 2017. But the big question is what happens after, when a new president takes over and could, potentially, overturn the guidance.

Even though pot is now legal in four states and Washington, DC, Republican candidates in particular seem more hostile to relaxed marijuana laws. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who's running for president, has [said](#) that people in states where marijuana is legal should "enjoy it until January of 2017, because I will enforce the federal laws against marijuana as president of the United States." Other candidates haven't been as blunt, but they have indicated they oppose legalization.

Marijuana is, after all, still illegal at the federal level. The Obama administration hasn't changed that (Obama still opposes legalization), but it has agreed to let states and Native American tribes legalize the drug without much federal interference.

The Democratic candidates haven't said they support legalization. But [Hillary Clinton](#) and [Bernie Sanders](#) have suggested states should be able to change their marijuana laws without federal interference. Presumably, the same applies to Native American tribes.

So whether the legalization efforts of the Santee Sioux tribe — and other states, and perhaps other tribes — remain unscathed after 2017 could depend on who the next president is.

Direct Link: <http://www.vox.com/2015/9/29/9417871/santee-sioux-marijuana-resort>

Pocahontas float at high school homecoming parade sparks outrage from Native American students

Posted 6:46 pm, September 29, 2015, by Tamara Vaifanua, Updated at 08:38pm, September 29, 2015

WEST JORDAN, Utah – A group of American Indian students who attend Copper Hills High School didn't like how their culture was being portrayed during homecoming festivities last Thursday and took their concerns to administrators.

Disney-themed characters such as Snow White, Cinderella and Mulan lined the parade route for the Copper Hills High homecoming parade. But a float carrying cheerleaders dressed as Pocahontas filled with teepees didn't go over well with the President of the school's American Indian Association.

Shelby Snyder said the costumes and float was disrespectful and demeaning towards Native American culture. Snyder Gathered 190 signatures from students and delivered them to the principal urging him to address the issue.

Principal Todd Quarnberg apologized to Snyder.

He issued the following statement to FOX 13 News:

“Copper Hills High is sorry for the insensitivity that caused our Native American brothers and sisters or anyone else to be offended.

The homecoming parade had a Disney theme, which was 'Once Upon a Time.' There were approximately 20 floats that included Pirates of the Caribbean, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Disney Princesses, Mulan, Pocahontas, Peter Pan and others.

Administration, parents and staff involved were devastated to learn that others were offended and hurt by the Pocahontas float. I have offered several public and private apologies to those offended.

In regard to sensitivity toward Native Americans, the school is taking action to ensure that no individual from any culture is singled out in a negative way. We admit this was not culturally sensitive. Current online discussions can be unproductive. We encourage civil dialogue, rather than negativity. We don't need threats we need increased understanding.

There have been several public apologies, numerous meetings with students and parents who took offense and the school is speaking with Native American leaders in the community to help educate our students and staff. Copper Hills High embraces diversity and we want an inclusive environment for every student.

We are in the business of education and will learn from this mistake and use it to educate our students and staff. We teach students to stand up for what they believe in but we also need to protect those students. We have a Native American club at Copper Hills High and we will work with them and include them as we move forward through this process.

I love Copper Hills High, its students and community. We are devastated that people were offended and ask for civil conversation so healing can begin and we can move forward in harmony.”

Matt Hunsaker was surprised when his daughter told him about the backlash over her costume and float. He says it was all in good fun.

“I don’t believe in any sense that these girls would have intentionally try to hurt anybody,” Hunsaker said.

James Singer, a blogger, and Native American activist wrote an article blasting the school for perpetuating stereotypes.

“Racism today looks like this. This is 21st century racism. It’s different than looking at something like Chip and Dale or Mickey Mouse dressing up as that. It’s not the same as someone’s culture. We’re looking at all the natives throughout all the Americas and saying, ‘look we can boil you down and centralize you to this costume and make you look like a fool,’” Singer said.

Jordan School District officials say they are working with the State Office of Education to provide sensitivity training for students and teachers.

Direct Link: <http://fox13now.com/2015/09/29/pocahontas-float-at-high-school-homecoming-parade-sparks-outrage-from-native-american-students/>

Navajo Midwives in New Mexico Plan First-Ever Native American Birth Center



Changing Women Initiative founders Nicolle Gonzales (l) and Brittany Simplicio

Tue, Sep 29, 2015 5:34 PM EDT

Nicolle Gonzales is a 35-year-old certified nurse midwife (CNM) with three kids ages 9 to 14. She's Navajo (or Diné, as Navajo people refer to themselves), from Waterflow, New Mexico, and has embarked on a journey to create the nation's first Native American birth center. "I'd like to see a nice building with pictures of our grandmothers, cedar welcoming you into the door, and moccasins for babies instead of blankets," says Gonzales. "I want a place where women and families feel welcome."

Gonzales is among only 14 other Native American CNMs in the United States. She and Brittany Simplicio, another midwife who is Navajo/Zuni, began raising money for a nonprofit that will run the center, Changing Woman Initiative (CWI), last year.

"There is this huge disconnect between the cultural teachings and our bodies as women. [I want] to advocate for taking back our teachings about our bodies that our ancestors knew before the boarding schools or Indian Health Services came," says Gonzales. "I've worked at Indian Health Services. I was not happy with the care that the Native women were receiving there. I needed to do something to step up and support Native women."

Indian Health Services (IHS), a program funded through the U.S. federal government, provides the majority of health care for Native people. Gonzales says it is routinely underfunded, and she points to her stint at the Santa Fe Indian Health Services. The facility was forced to shut down its labor and delivery ward in 2008 due to underfunding. Native women can get prenatal care there, but have to then apply for Medicaid and transfer to another hospital for the actual delivery. This interaction between IHS and Medicaid creates confusion, as some in the community don't realize they are eligible for both. "I had one couple [whose baby died] and the nurses said it was because the doctor wasn't available to do a C-section," says Gonzales. "This couple came back [to IHS] a year later because they didn't feel like they could go anywhere else."

IHS also has a complicated reputation among Native women because of widespread sterilizations performed there in the 1970s. In a chapter for an upcoming book, Gonzales explains further: "As part of the government's efforts to assimilate and disempower [N]ative women, in the 1970s, the Indian Health Service oversaw the nonconsensual sterilization of approximately 40 percent of women of childbearing age. It is events like this that still resonate strongly for American Indian women, and contribute to the historical trauma they have experienced over the centuries."

Along with providing a pregnancy care alternative to IHS, Gonzales says the CWI birthing center project will also address the significant health disparities faced by Native women in the Southwest region. In the center's strategic plan she and Simplicio attribute the disparities to the destruction of indigenous knowledge systems by colonization and to "cultural disparities" created by poverty, discrimination, geography and racism. "Among the 23 government-recognized tribes in New Mexico, these disparities manifest as higher rates of gestational diabetes, increased rates of

postpartum depression, and higher rates of preterm birth and low birth weights,” they write.

For the birthing center to work, Gonzalez says there needs to be a culture shift in how midwifery is perceived in her community as something “white.” “Even as I applied [to midwifery school] and I went back to my community, they asked why I wanted to be a hippy midwife. In fact we’ve always Native American midwives in our tribes. They see it as a white women thing.”

This stands in contrast to the history of Native midwives that Gonzales outlines in her book chapter: “Before [W]estern ideological influences converged with the Native traditional ways of birthing, [i]ndigenous tribes had traditional midwives or family members who attended to births in their own communities. In the Navajo culture, these women were called ‘baby medicine women’ or ‘umbilical cord cutter.’” Before the emergence of hospitals, births primarily took place in homes called ‘Hogans.’”

Seventy percent of births at IHS nationally are attended by CNMs, but the vast majority of those are non-Native providers. [Recent research from aboriginal communities in Australia](#) show that outcomes improve when indigenous women are served by indigenous providers.

Gonzales and Simplicio plan to use IHS funds to run their center, but they will also seek funds from foundations and other agencies. They haven't yet decided if they will locate their center on tribal land. “We would have to find a tribal community that has a stable enough government that would be safe to build a birth center on,” Gonzales says. “You have to go back to that conversation about [whether] tribes value their health. The tribes here are focused on water rights and land rights. Health care is not one of their priorities.” There are also benefits to being placed on non-tribal land, Gonzales says, like higher reimbursement rates from Medicaid for ameliorating rural provider shortages.

Gonzales notes that there are three birthing centers in aboriginal communities in Canada, and CWI is planning to visit them to learn about their models. They've launched a [GoFundMe campaign](#) to raise money for this research.

CWI has been in development for five years and its founders are at least three years away from seeing the birth center open. In the meantime, Gonzales says she is focusing on supporting other Native American midwifery students and building with indigenous midwives across North America. Toward the end of our conversation she describes attending the National Council of Aboriginal Midwives gathering in 2011. “I just balled my eyes out because these women looked like me,” she says. “They understood what it was about—it was about healing their communities. It’s a spiritual path.”

Direct Link: <http://www.colorlines.com/articles/navajo-midwives-new-mexico-plan-first-ever-native-american-birth-center>

Jeb Bush's Position on Washington Redskins Offends Some Native Americans



Jeb Bush spoke Tuesday about his energy policy at Rice Energy in Canonsburg, Pa.

Jeb Bush waded into the politics of professional football this week and was hit by Native American groups on Wednesday for saying that the Washington Redskins was not an offensive team name.

The issue has been a divisive one in [Washington and in Congress](#) as the N.F.L. and the franchise have come under pressure from some Native Americans who say the name is racist and demand that it be changed.

In an interview with [Sirius XM's POTUS channel](#), Mr. Bush said that he had no problem with the name and that the debate was overblown.

"I don't think it should change it," Mr. Bush said. "I don't find it offensive."

Mr. Bush went on to explain that he faced a similar issue when he was the governor of Florida and questions arose about Florida State University's nickname, the Seminoles, and recalled that members of the Seminole tribe in his state supported the university in keeping the name. In 2005 the N.C.A.A. banned Native American mascots in postseason tournaments amid pressure from civil rights groups.

"How politically correct can you get?" Mr. Bush said at the time, opposing the mascot ban. "The folks that make these decisions need to get out more often."

Political correctness has been a hot topic in the Republican presidential campaign this year as Donald J. Trump has taken a hard line on immigration and used phrases such as "anchor babies" to describe children born to immigrants who come to the United States illegally. Mr. Bush, who has struck a more tolerant tone toward immigrants, surprised some when he also used the term "anchor babies" and said it was acceptable.

But Change the Mascot, an advocacy group that represents Native American tribes, took issue with Mr. Bush's comments on Wednesday.

"What is surprising is that in promoting the use of this slur, the governor somehow believes he speaks for Native Americans and can assert that Native American people do not find this slur offensive," the [group said in a statement](#).

Change the Mascot also suggested that Mr. Bush's position might be related to his ties to the owner of the Redskins, Dan Snyder. According to a Federal Election Commission filing, Mr. Snyder [donated \\$100,000](#) this year to Right to Rise, the super PAC that supports Mr. Bush.

Democrats also condemned Mr. Bush's acceptance of the name. Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida, the chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, said it was an "extremely insulting" racial slur and predicted the Mr. Bush's position would hurt his prospects of earning the Native American vote.

Mr. Bush did say in the Sirius interview that the debate should not be decided by politicians.

"It's a sport, for crying out loud — it's a football team," he said. "I'm missing something here, I guess."

Direct Link: http://www.nytimes.com/politics/first-draft/2015/09/30/jeb-bushs-position-on-washington-redskins-offends-some-native-americans/?_r=0

These Amazing Native American Designers Are Getting a Huge Endorsement

By [Theresa Avila](#) September 29, 2015
Like Mic on Facebook:

The emerald dress' pattern designed by [Bethany Yellowtail](#) consists of tiny illustrated elk teeth, which often [adorned traditional clothing](#) worn by Crow Nation members. The panther imagery in [Kristen Dorsey's](#) hand-sculpted jewelry is a nod to her Chickasaw heritage and references a powerful mythical being believed to travel the underworld via rivers and lakes. On the online boutique [Beyond Buckskin](#), Jessica R. Metcalfe curates merchandise by contemporary Native American designers, ranging from beaded cuffs and earrings to bags made out of deer hide.

The three women are of Native heritage, their work infused with a deep cultural appreciation for the histories and traditions of their respective communities. They also

share another common thread: They're finalists in [an online competition](#) organized by Martha Stewart that spotlights handcrafted products made in the U.S.

The three Native American businesswomen selected as finalists in the Martha Stewart contest, "American Made" are, from left to right: Kristen Dorsey, Bethany Yellowtail and Jessica R. Metcalfe. Source: [Courtesy of Kristen Dorsey, Bethany Yellowtail and Jessica Metcalfe](#)

On Sept. 21, a panel of judges announced that Yellowtail, Dorsey and Metcalfe were among the [finalists in four different categories](#). Moving forward, the winners, who are up for a [\\$10,000 cash prize](#) and a trip to New York City, will be determined by the public.

Native American influences in fashion aren't difficult to find. Feathered headdresses are [regularly worn](#) at music festivals, even though they hold [a sacred significance](#) in Native American culture. Retail companies have also [faced lawsuits](#) for plagiarizing trademarked goods and other designers have paid "tribute" to indigenous people while simultaneously [ripping off designs](#) by Native American designers.

But by honoring the work of three Native American designers, the Martha Stewart American-Made Competition is providing a platform for members of a marginalized and underrepresented community. "To be recognized on that level is so exciting and it really just makes me feel like all your hard work is heading in the right direction," Metcalfe told *Mic*.

Here's a look at what motivates each woman to create and share their Native American culture.

Jessica Metcalfe

In 2009, Jessica Metcalfe, part of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, launched her blog Beyond Buckskin, where she documented instances of [cultural appropriation](#) by major retailers.

Things took a turn in 2012 when the Navajo Nation [sued Urban Outfitters](#) for plagiarizing textiles that were distinctly Navajo. Metcalfe said she then realized there wasn't an online space where shoppers could easily find Native American artists to buy merchandise from and support instead of resorting to watered-down copycats.

"It just felt like the time was now, I have to launch this now," she said. "This needs to happen and I need to put everything in it, it can't just be my side thing that I do in the evening." Metcalfe quit her job and devoted herself to building up the [Beyond Buckskin](#) boutique, which highlights modern Native American artists who break down [stereotypes about Native American designs](#).

"There is a movement going on. There are Native designers and artists who are particularly extraordinary," Metcalfe said. "But the average person doesn't know about this stuff. So that's where I come in."

Metcalfe has an idea of why she was selected for the competition. In recent years, the public has become more interested in hand-crafted and locally sourced goods, which has led to a greater appreciation for American-made products, she said.

"There is a part of me that is like, 'Hey, there isn't anything more American than like, Native American.' You know, we're kind of like at the core here," she said.

She looks forward to continuing her work by highlighting Native American designers who infuse history and cultural meaning into their products. "Those stories [in the designer's work] are often rooted in ancient stories that were told here a long time ago," Metcalfe said. "They're not just objects, they're much more than that."

Kristen Dorsey

Kristen Dorsey remembers how, during her childhood, several family members owned an unassuming book with yellowed pages. The book — a thesis, in fact — included a detailed history of her family lineage, complete with information about her Chickasaw ancestors in [the Colbert clan](#), a prominent family from the Southeastern region that fought in the French and Indian War.

Her curiosity about the book inspired a lifelong obsession with her family history. "I'm just fascinated with the generations before us and how that's shaped us today," she said. Dorsey incorporates that historical appreciation into her jewelry designs.

While in college, Dorsey began formally researching the artistic styles of her community and Southeastern Native Americans. To revitalize Southeastern traditions, she began learning how to weld and work with precious metals for her jewelry collections, often incorporating materials her ancestors typically used like conch shells, pearls, copper and the occasional stingray skin.

Stories from Chickasaw folklore also made their way into her designs. That's why each piece on her site has accompanying text that contextualizes the jewelry.

Her [latest collection](#) features designs resembling warrior's shields, an allusion to her matrilineal Native community. "I have these shields symbolize how women are guardians of their children first and then their community and then their culture," she said. "And they're this link that culture is passed on through."

Dorsey said she feels a certain drive to continue sharing her culture through her jewelry. In doing so, she hopes to raise the profile of Southeastern Native American art while dispelling misconceptions.

"By doing so, I'm constantly breaking down stereotypes that people have," she said. "About who Native Americans are and what Native American jewelry is and what Native American art is."

Bethany Yellowtail

Inspired to go into fashion design by a home-economics teacher, Bethany Yellowtail moved to Los Angeles after graduating high school, where she studied at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Earlier this year, she launched her first collection at age 26. Her designs feature feminine and classic silhouettes like flowing dresses and long skirts.

A close look reveals tributes to her Native American heritage as part of the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Nations. In one design, elk teeth line a sheer black slip dress, a reference to the traditional regalia worn in her community.

For Yellowtail, incorporating elements of her Native American background is part of a conscious decision to share her culture with non-Native people. So often, instances of cultural appropriation [make headlines](#) in the press and a hostile conversation ensues, she said. By designing clothes that everyone can wear, she hopes to open a positive dialogue about the stories her culture has to offer, Yellowtail said.

When she first began designing her collection, Yellowtail was inspired by two family photos. One black-and-white image depicted her great-aunt doing the women's warbonnet dance, or "Shoshone Warbonnet Dance," in the 1930s. The other was a color photograph of her sister doing the same dance to commemorate young women leaders.

"Just putting [the photos] next to each other gave me this overwhelming feeling of love and pride," Yellowtail said. "And it was just so beautiful to clearly see this story of continuity of our people and that our traditions are still being passed on."

Those photos inspired Yellowtail to commission a custom piece of art from [John Pepion](#) depicting women wearing the warbonnet. The resulting image is printed on a [chiffon scarf](#) as part of her collection.

"I love the stories that come from our community and I want to share that with people who want to have a better understanding," she said. "When it comes down to it, I'm just sharing my story. I'm sharing who I am as a woman, as a Crow and Cheyenne woman, an indigenous woman. And to share it is very personal."

Sharing that story can be a vulnerable experience. After all, the history of Native American in the United States is fraught with trauma [from relocation](#) and [continued marginalization](#). Still, the fact that Native American stories are so rarely authentically told in mainstream media drives Yellowtail to keep designing.

"The only way to do it is for us to do it and to step up to that plate and just do it ourselves it," she said. "If we want to see proper representation, nobody can represent ourselves like we can."

Direct Link: <http://mic.com/articles/125974/martha-stewart-is-promoting-works-by-native-american-designers-jessica-r-metcalf-bethany-yellowtail-and-kristen-dorsey>

South Dakota Slated to Cut Native American History

[Sheena Louise Roetman](#)

9/30/15

South Dakota high school students will not be learning about Native Americans next year, thanks to some [quietly approved changes in content standards](#) that no longer require students to study early American history.

Beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year, high school students in South Dakota may choose one of three courses to satisfy their single U.S. history requirement: Early U.S. History, Modern U.S. History or Comprehensive U.S. History.

A group of 35 educators made up the South Dakota Social Studies Content Standards Revision Committee, which recommended the adjustments that were approved on August 24, after a year long approval process – the first changes to be made since 2006.

RELATED: [Doctrine of Discovery: A Scandal In Plain Sight](#)

The changes effectively remove a large part of American historical context from the required curriculum, including colonialism, the American War for Independence, slavery, Manifest Destiny, the Civil War and women's suffrage.

Students may still opt to take Early U.S. History. They also now have the option of avoiding it altogether, which makes it a "non-standard standard," said Ben Jones, dean of arts and sciences for Dakota State University in Madison, [as told to the Argus Leader](#).

The entire content standards report emphasizes critical thinking, inquiry, communication and problem solving skills.

"Rather than just having them memorize a list of historical events on a time line," Michael Amolins, Harrisburg School District Secondary Curriculum Director, told KSFY, "we're trying to get them to use that information in context so that when they're looking at current events they can make good and informed decisions as citizens and as voters."

But this leads to another concern – what happens when students get to college?

“What we're going to get is students who don't differentiate,” Michael Mullins, a history professor at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, [told KSFY](#). “Say, Abraham Lincoln's time period from George Washington's time period from the Puritans. And it will get lumped together and we'll wonder why.”

Jones told the *Argus Leader*, “It’s disabling their citizenship.”

According to the *Argus Leader*, instructors from colleges and universities around the state submitted a letter to the board opposing the lack of required history. This list included representatives from Dakota State University, University of South Dakota, South Dakota State University, Northern State University, Augustana University, Presentation College, the University of Sioux Falls and Black Hills State University.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/09/30/south-dakota-slanted-cut-native-american-history-161914>

OU Undergraduate Student Congress votes to approve Indigenous Peoples' Day resolution



Indigenize OU

From left: Sydne Gray, philosophy sophomore, Josh Murphy, health and exercise science senior, Jesse Robbins, Native American studies senior and Ashley McCray, History of Science Program doctoral student pose together after Tuesday night's SGA Congress meeting. The resolution to have the university recognize the second Monday in October as Indigenous People's Day was stalled at the Tuesday night meeting.

Posted: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 10:04 pm | *Updated: 9:59 am, Wed Sep 30, 2015.*

Brianna Sims, News Reporter

Posted on Sep 29, 2015

by [Brianna Sims](#)

The Undergraduate Student Congress voted to approve a resolution written by Indigenize OU recognizing Oct. 12 as Indigenous Peoples' Day for the OU campus on Tuesday night.

Although the resolution already passed in the Graduate Student Senate on Sept. 27, and because the resolution's language was changed, the senate will have to vote on it again on Oct. 11, Congress Chair Emily Sample said.

Spanish International Studies and World Language Education senior Brooke Lefler proposed the amendment for the wording of one of the clauses of the amendment.

The language was previously “the state of Oklahoma has the second largest population of indigenous people in the nation and since 2012 the enrollment rate of Native American students at OU has decreased significantly, demonstrating the lack of welcoming environment and resources available for Native Students.”

To better represent the need to develop a more welcoming environment, Lefler suggested changing it to "Whereas the State of Oklahoma has the second largest population of indigenous people in the nation and whereas the University of Oklahoma aims to recruit, serve and retain indigenous students, faculty and staff, Indigenous Peoples' Day will contribute to creating a welcoming environment and informing students of available resources."

Nevertheless, members of Indigenize OU are satisfied with the progress the group has made.

This past week, both the General Student Senate and congress met with members of Indigenize OU to formally write a resolution to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Traditionally, a concurrent resolution is written, then it moves through congress, is passed in the senate and travels to the executive branch before being signed by President David Boren to become a law.

“A resolution is a recommendation,” Sample said.

This time, both legislative bodies of SGA came together in a joint committee with Indigenize OU to formally write the resolution.

“We ended up forming this joint committee to craft the legislation together and pass it as one body,” SGA President Alex Byron said. “What (this joint meeting is) doing is not forgoing the committee process but rather replacing it in order to do a joint resolution as opposed to a concurrent resolution. The implications of this are a little different. As opposed to saying both bodies support and affirm this statement or resolution being passed, when you do a joint resolution, you say all of SGA, consequently all of the student bodies, support this opinion.”

The main goal of the resolution is to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day on campus. SGA helped write the resolution to best represent Indigenize OU in SGA.

“We spoke with Ashley McCray and Sydne Gray from Indigenize OU,” Daniel Pae, human diversity chair, said. They provided us with a draft resolution, which we discussed during the course of the meeting. We ensured that the ideas and main points they emphasized were included in the final draft of the resolution.”

Sample said SGA as well as Indigenize OU hope to send the resolution to various people, such as Gov. Mary Fallin.

During the Graduate Student Senate meeting on Sunday, Indigenize OU explained its goals and aspirations for the resolution.

This bill collectively passed without opposition and moved on to the congress meeting held on Tuesday.

The room was packed with people who were anxious to hear the ruling of the resolution. Indigenize OU stood in front of congress and, once again, explained its hope for this recognition. The group had 20 minutes; but, Ashley McCray only took two minutes to present the piece of legislation. The rest of the time allotted was moved to questioning.

Much of the discussion was about the events Indigenize OU has proposed for Indigenous Peoples' Day. The group plans on working with organizations like the Campus Activities Council and Union Programming Board to collaborate for an event it hopes will highlight its culture.

The group wants a celebration to showcase its vibrant culture with song, dance, food and other cultural representations, McCray said.

“It’s still passing the day of Columbus Day, and maybe that’s what the creator of all things needed it to be. The spirits made it that day. That’s the day it needs to be. We still get to go back to our families and say it passed,” Robbins said.

Gray and Robbins are both extremely optimistic about the future of the resolution.

“When we first saw the senate, they received the resolution very well. There wasn’t as much conversation and questions. It was something they agreed upon unanimously,” Gray said.

The resolution will be delivered to the senate on Oct. 11. Then it would need to be signed by Byron and then Boren for OU to recognize the holiday.

“It’s necessary, and we need to do it now,” McCray said.

CORRECTION: This story was corrected at 9:58 a.m. on Wednesday Sept. 30. In the original story, the new amendment language read "...Indigenous People's Day would contribute to making a welcoming environment and informing students." The story now reflects the actual language of the amendment: "...Indigenous Peoples' Day will contribute to creating a welcoming environment and informing students of available resources."

Direct Link: http://www.oudaily.com/news/ou-undergraduate-student-congress-votes-to-approve-indigenous-peoples-day/article_08384d90-6720-11e5-9cc5-e79a4ea6fdca.html

Tribes Balk at Dartmouth’s Native American Director

Groups are accusing the new hire of misrepresenting her heritage



Susan Taffe Reed, director of the Native American Program at Dartmouth.

By Dan Frosch

Sept. 30, 2015 4:42 p.m. ET

When Dartmouth College named Susan Taffe Reed as the new director of its Native American Program in September, it said she would use her role as president of the Eastern Delaware Nations to help Indian students adjust to life at the Ivy League school.

But since Ms. Reed's hiring, tribal officials and Dartmouth alumni have accused her of misrepresenting herself as an American Indian and the school of failing to adequately vet her background as a leader of a nonprofit group that acknowledges it isn't an actual tribe.

Ms. Reed says she is of Native heritage, though in response to queries, she didn't specify which tribe or tribes she descends from. The Hanover, N.H., school has defended her hiring, saying it would never ask job applicants to document their ethnicity. There is no requirement for the program director to be Native American, Dartmouth officials said, but alumni noted that the position is traditionally held by Native Americans.

The dispute, unfolding at an elite academic institution that decreed it would educate Indian youth in its founding charter in 1769 and has produced many prominent Native American graduates, underscores the tangled issue of tribal recognition and identity.

Ms. Reed, who earned her doctorate at Cornell University in American Indian Studies and musicology, has written extensively on Native American culture. But at issue is her background with the Eastern Delaware Nations, which describes itself as a heritage group of sorts for Native Americans in Pennsylvania and notes on its website that some of its members aren't of Indian descent.

In the wake of Ms. Reed's hiring, leaders from several federally recognized tribes to which the Eastern Delaware Nations claims connections have voiced concerns to Dartmouth administrators.

In interviews, leaders of some of those tribes, and some Native American Dartmouth alumni, characterized the group as "pretendians" and said they had no documented connection to any tribes. Some Native American activists say they can find no records linking Ms. Reed's family, which has helped lead the group, founded in 1984, to any tribal heritage.

"They basically just formed their own nation and have been playing this role-playing game ever since," said Jacqueline Keeler, a Native American Dartmouth graduate and columnist for the online newspaper Indian Country Today.

In an email, Ms. Reed said she was of mixed Native and European heritage and had never misrepresented herself. She didn't respond to additional questions regarding which tribe her family descended from. Most state and federally recognized American Indian tribes have specific requirements for enrollment, including blood quantum requirements, and documenting the presence of ancestors on tribal rolls.

“My Native and non-Native family members raised me to know about my ancestry, including our family’s oral history and traditions that have been passed down for generations,” she said. “I have participated in Native American ceremonies and powwow dancing since I was a little girl.”

Ms. Reed said Native Americans living in the Endless Mountains Region of Northeastern Pennsylvania, where the Eastern Delaware group is based, had historically hidden their Native American identity over the years.

Dartmouth, meanwhile, has resisted calls to remove Ms. Reed, who assumed the position in September. “I can say Susan never represented herself as a member of a federal or state recognized tribe. She was transparent about her professional and personal experience, and we’re satisfied with the credentials she provided,” said Dartmouth spokeswoman Diana Lawrence.

Bruce Duthu, a professor of Native American studies at Dartmouth who headed the search committee that helped hire Ms. Reed, said she had been forthright in describing her background.

“In the case of Native peoples [and other people of color], state records, including birth and death certificates, are notoriously unreliable sources of information about personal background,” he said.

But Ben Barnes, the second chief of the Shawnee tribe, said Ms. Reed’s hiring had undermined the relationship between the school and Native American students.

“You can’t just go create a tribe out of nothing,” he said. The Shawnee tribe inhabited a region that included Pennsylvania in colonial times but was pushed westward and is now based in Oklahoma.

Nicky Kay Michael, a council member for the Delaware tribe, said she had never heard of the Eastern Delaware Nations and that her tribe’s descendants had all been forced out of Pennsylvania by the late 1700s before eventually ending up in Oklahoma.

“We know our history. Folks claiming to have remained in Pennsylvania, we’re very skeptical about that,” said Ms. Michael, a visiting professor of Native American Studies at the University of Wyoming. “Dartmouth said she was working with her Delaware tribal community. She hasn’t worked with us.”

Last week, the Native American Alumni Association of Dartmouth called for the school to remove Ms. Reed, saying that while the program director needn’t be a member of a recognized tribe, they must be able to relate to Indian students and help them navigate the culture of Dartmouth.

“It has become clear to the NAAAD Board that Dr. Taffe Reed cannot effectively carry out her duties,” the alumni board said.

Direct Link: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/tribes-balk-at-dartmouths-native-american-director-1443645778>

Sustainable Development Goals Could Learn From Indigenous Peoples

Wednesday, 30 September 2015 00:00 By [Fionuala Cregan](#), [Common Dreams](#) | Op-Ed

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This weekend, world leaders gather at the United Nations in New York to endorse, to much fanfare, celebrity endorsement and self-congratulation, the new global plan for poverty: "[Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)." Otherwise known as The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Meanwhile, far from the glitz and limelight, the Guarani Indigenous Peoples in Bolivia are suffering violent repression as they demonstrate against oil extraction on their land. Thousands of Shuar and Achuar Indigenous have taken to the streets of Ecuador demanding an end to large scale extractive projects in the Amazon, and a group of Qom and Wichi Indigenous begin their sixth month camped on a main avenue in Argentina's capital Buenos Aires to demand a meeting with the government about the loss of their ancestral lands to mass soy cultivation.

Across the world, Indigenous Peoples are at the forefront of struggles to defend the Earth's remaining habitats from the relentless advance of extractive industries, from open air mining, to oil drilling to and single crop industrial agriculture.

Unfortunately, the new SDGs offer them little by way of support.

The SDGs are drenched in feel good phrases like: "peaceful and inclusive societies"; "effective and accountable institutions"; "healthy lives and well-being for all"; and "harmony with nature." In reality, however, this self-proclaimed "transformative agenda" is little more than a [fig-leaf for business-as-usual](#).

Once you strip away all the feel good rhetoric, it becomes clear that at the centre of the SDGs is a single idea: perpetual economic growth. In the real world, this means ever-increasing levels of extraction, production and consumption, including a 7 percent annual

GDP growth for the world's least-developed countries (LDCs). This, according to the UN and their big NGO and big business collaborators, is the key to solving poverty and inequality.

Alberto Aguirre, a Qom Indigenous activist from Argentina, sees the effects of this obsession with endless growth. "In the last 30 years we have seen an unprecedented pillaging of the Earth's natural resources. This has brought with it hunger and environmental devastation," he says. "Market economies have caused pollution, hunger and death. In the past, communities lived in harmony with Nature, the rivers were not contaminated, people did not go hungry and species were intact."

And he should know. Until relatively recently, hunger and poverty as we understand them did not exist in Indigenous communities. We now live in a world where Indigenous Peoples make up only 4.4 percent of the global population, they account for about 10 percent of the world's poor. The same pattern is evident across continents: evicted from their ancestral lands to make way for industrial development and the "miracle" of economic growth, Indigenous communities suffer some of the highest levels of hunger, illiteracy and preventable diseases.

"It pains us today to see our children go hungry, rivers with so few fish and acres of forest, which provide so much, ravaged in minutes by bulldozers," says Antonia Zeron, a Guaraní Indigenous leader from Bolivia. "When my grandmother was a child, she did not go hungry, the land belonged to everyone."

The SDGs do acknowledge the breadth and depth of the challenge: "Billions of our citizens continue to live in poverty and are denied a life of dignity. There are rising inequalities within and among countries... Natural resource depletion and adverse impacts of environmental degradation, including desertification, drought, land degradation, freshwater scarcity and loss of biodiversity, add to and exacerbate the list of challenges which humanity faces. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development." The problem is that they then actively sidestep any mention of the root cause of these "challenges."

The SDGs only response to our polycrisis is for more of the same: more economic growth, everywhere; more industrial production and consumption; and more of the same basic thinking that has brought us to this point.

In their desire to satisfy the demands of a global elite whose only concept of progress is ever more profit, the SDGs have ignored the voices of those who have the clearest insight into type of change needed. "What we need is spiritual and philosophical change," says Aguirre, "a return to living in harmony and listening carefully to the knowledge of Mother Earth."

Indigenous Peoples' wisdom - still deeply rooted in their cultures despite over 500 years of colonisation and genocide - should be a source of inspiration and guidance that brings our focus to deep structural and spiritual dimensions of change.

"The Earth gives us life - that is why for Indigenous People she is Mother Earth. Human beings are not the owners of the Earth - they are another element of it closely interconnected to all other living things from plants and animal to water and air, and we must live in synchronicity with them," explains Aguirre. "When hunting or gathering we only ever take as much as we need, never more, and we rotate hunting territories to allow the land replenish itself and ensure the delicate balance of the eco-system is maintained. It is no coincidence that 80 per cent of the Earth's remaining biodiversity can be found on Indigenous territories."

"Living in harmony also means a society where resources and responsibilities are shared, where no one individual is disproportionately powerful or wealthy. People are valued for their contribution to the community and not for individual personal wealth and power from a rigged game. Resources are shared so that families, communities and the natural environment thrive and survive not just in the present but for generations to come," adds Seron.

Felix Diaz, one of the leaders of the Indigenous protest camp in Buenos Aires likens this to a fire. "I like to think of a communal fire as a symbol of our humanity," said Diaz. "One person adds wood, another adds paper and each contribution brings light and warmth to the whole group."

The SDGs do not represent the flames of change. In fact, they are more of a smoke signal, a mere distraction. The hope now rests in their potential to spark indignation, to help build a movement of people who recognize the true depths of the challenges we face. This emerging movement is increasingly standing with and learning from Indigenous Peoples all over the world in their struggle to protect what we have left, and return to a way of life that is more balanced and in harmony with the living force of the whole planet.

Direct Link: <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/33028-sustainable-development-goals-could-learn-from-indigenous-peoples>

'Justice or Else' for Black, Brown and Indigenous Americans

Posted: 10/01/2015 10:21 am EDT Updated: 10/01/2015 10:59 am EDT

[Erica Garner](#), Founder of Garner Way Foundation and daughter of Eric Garner

[Reggie Harris](#), Political Director for Garner Way Foundation



Twenty years ago, there was a gathering of men in the U.S. Capital to address the exact issues that Black, Brown and Indigenous Americans are struggling against today. That gathering is known as the Million Man March. Its purpose was to bring attention to the issues of mass incarceration, low-paying jobs, joblessness, poverty, police brutality, low-quality education and inadequate housing among many others. The Honorable Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam served as the lead organization in bringing all of the March participants together, and the country hasn't seen anything like it since.

Twenty years later, the struggle of Black, Brown and Indigenous Americans is getting worse. "[Justice or Else](#)," to me, is an opportunity for us all to come together with one voice and one agenda. No matter what divides us, we all have yet to receive the justice we deserve.

It is important for us to show the world we can stand together as one people. It's even more important for our youth to see us standing together and fighting for what is right. It shows them that they can push back against a corrupt system without being a so-called "thug."

It lets them know that we can gather in large groups in a display of solidarity and love, and not end up killing each other as is so often the popular media narrative. It shows the world that we can organize, demonstrate and resist and at the same time be "civilized" people who just want to be treated as humans that are equal in a system that was never meant for us to be anything more than property and savages.

Justice means equity to us.

It means that no matter what our skin color is, we all start from the same place. That means any unearned privileges or obstacles you inherit as a result of your skin color are eliminated and that we are all equitable in this society. It means that you aren't shut out of society for life because you were railroaded into prison by design, and it means if you are put in prison that it is truly a place where healing and rehabilitation take place.

Prison cannot be a place where *anyone* makes a profit off of people working for legalized slave wages. The goal should be to ensure that formerly incarcerated people do not come back, unlike the predatory cycle of recidivism that exists today.

If you must pay a so-called "debt to society," you should be able to vote again, get public housing, and find a job after paying that debt. Justice to me means zero tolerance for police terror and police who abuse their power and brutalize Black, Brown and Indigenous Americans.

Justice for us is our teachers being equipped with the things they need to be successful with our youth and that the communities which have the most catching up to do get the most effective teachers. It means that we teach our kids a full and complete history about who we are as a country, where we all come from, and what we were all doing before we got here.

We all know that I haven't gotten justice, but that doesn't mean that I'm not going to keep fighting for it.

In my fight, I am inspired to know that even though I have been fighting for the last year, Indigenous and Brown Americans have been fighting for much longer, and Black people have been fighting in this country for the last several centuries.

Money isn't justice to me, and I think the Native Americans would agree. Truth and reconciliation are a really good start. This struggle is much larger than me. It's larger than the injustice against Black Americans that has been captured on video over the last year. We have seen our voting rights stripped right along with our humanity. And it is time that we join together to say, "Enough is enough. We want justice -- or else!"

Direct Link: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/erica-garner/justice-or-else-black-brown-indigenous-americans_b_8224814.html